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Dragon

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EARNING XP

In a recent interview, I answered a question about how I got into the RPG industry with my usual response: After wasting some time thinking that working on D&D was a pipe dream, I asked myself "why not me?" and upon discovering the answers, I set about doing what I needed to do to make my dreams reality. Yet after giving it some thought, I realized that there was more to it than that.

As a teenager, I had several part-time jobs. In order of employment, I worked as an onion dumper at an onion packing company, a clothes folder at a women's apparel shop, a janitor at a Budweiser bottling plant, an assembly-line worker at a spring factory, a cook at a Pizza Hut, a dish washer at a restaurant, and a sales clerk at a game and comic store. These jobs taught me things that helped me get where I am today.

The onion packing company taught me to quit. It might sound strange if you've never had to quit a job, but knowing when to walk out the door is an important skill. After literally shedding blood, sweat, and tears dumping a 60-pound bag of onions every 20 seconds for 8 hours each day, I learned that particular skill before the end of my first week.

From my day as a clothes folder, I learned I'm incapable of properly folding clothes.

At Budweiser, I learned about taking pride in my work. My friend and I worked as temporary janitors, helping the cleaning company make the plant look spiffy before an inspection. At the end of our first day, we were praised for our fantastic work and told that we did a better job than the usual staff. That made me ashamed because we spent most of the day goofing off and talking about D&D. I didn't like that feeling. It taught me that doing my best was important for my satisfaction and happiness, regardless of the result.

The spring factory taught patience and endurance of drudgery. Imagine this: You take a bent wire from a bucket on your left, place it in a machine, pull down two levers, remove the wire (now with two bends in it!), and place it in a bucket on your right. After 8 hours of this, you go home.

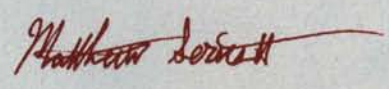
Working at Pizza Hut taught me that I like pizza—a lot. It never got old. Mmm...pizza. I guess I also learned something about responsibility, but exactly what I learned is now lost amid halcyon memories of bread sticks and black olives.

As a dishwasher, I learned to take direction and navigate a social hierarchy. Remember this tip should you find yourself in a restaurant kitchen (you can even try this in your kitchen at home): The cook is king; obey the person with the knife.

Not surprisingly, working at a game and comic store also helped. Watching people's buying habits firsthand, becoming knowledgeable about all kinds of games and hobbies, seeing what sells and what doesn't, and experiencing the difficulties retailers face gave me a good foundation for working in the RPG industry.

Working on *Dragon* for four and a half years has taught me more than I can relate in an editorial, but it seems that the most important lesson I've learned is that getting what you want from life, whether it's a career in the RPG industry or becoming president of the country, takes more than dreams, drive, and planning. You need to take punches and roll with them, make mistakes and learn from them, and learn from your successes. In short, you need experience.

Funny, that sounds familiar. . .



Matthew Sernett

NEXT MONTH IN DRAGON

DRAGON #326

Dragon gives you the best in gaming, presenting new official rules, original game content, great advice, and the perfect inspiration for your D&D game. In each issue, you'll also see cool products on the horizon, find out what other players are up to, and get an insider's look at the industry. Get more from your game: Get *Dragon*!

The Dungeon Delver's Guide
by Mark A. Hart and Jayce K. Purvis
What you don't know can kill your character. Think you know everything about dungeon delving? Check out this article to see what you forgot. What you learn could save your life.

Down the Drain
by Chris DeKalb by Jacob Steinmann
It's a crappy place to be unprepared. Discover the history, designs, and dangers of sewers—both real and fantastic.

Born of Fire
by Jonathan Drain
Release your character's inner fire. Play a half-elemental character (air, earth, fire, or water) from 1st level with these monster classes.

Get Lost!
by Kyla Ward
Whether as legendary traps for mythical monsters, passive protections against thieves and trespassers, or as playgrounds for royalty, labyrinths have long existed in our world. Find out more about historical labyrinths, learn how to use them in D&D, and discover what it takes to get your PC out of a mad wizard's maze alive.

Plus!
"Winning Races: Saurian Shifters," "The Ecology of Rakshasa," "A Novel Approach: *The Rite*," "Spellcraft: Cantrips," "Gaining Prestige: The Force Missile Mage," and of course, "Coup de Grace," "Class Acts," "The Magic Shop," "Heroic Feats," "Silicon Sorcery," "First Watch," "Player Initiative," "Scale Mail," "Adventurer Tricks," "Player Tips," "Sage Advice," and comics!

EBERRON SOUNDTRACK
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Available in November

Hop aboard a skycoach and hurl yourself into action amid the soaring towers of Khorvaire's most spectacular city. As the first in a series of supplements for the EBERRON campaign setting, *Sharn: City of Towers* promises limitless excitement, danger, fame, and fortune—for those bold enough to seek it.

30th Anniversary
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
EXPERIENCE COUNTS

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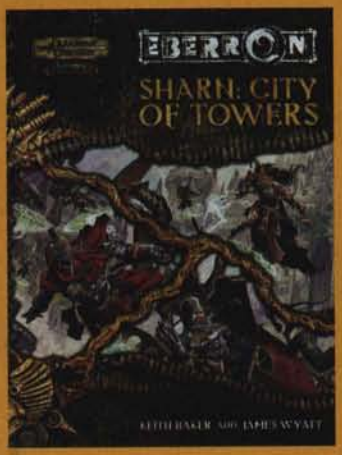
PREVIEWS, NOTES, AND NEWS FOR GAMERS

NEW RELEASES

Third in the "Complete" series, the *Complete Arcane* releases this month. In addition to collecting some of the coolest arcane spells, feats, magic items, classes, and prestige classes from several products and from DRAGON, *Complete Arcane* presents tons of new material. Try something new with the warlock spellcasting class. Get some advice about picking a prestige class for your arcane spellcaster. Learn about spellbook construction, and use the book's new rules. If that is not enough, pick up this book to check out the return of the wild mage!



Sharn: City of Towers marks the first release to detail the specific places and people of EBERRON. A book about EBERRON's greatest city might not spark your interest unless you're DMing an EBERRON game, but that's only if you're judging the book by its cover. Look inside and you'll find new prestige classes, feats, spells, and mundane and magic items for PC use, and guilds and organizations that player characters might join. DMs will find tons of useful stat blocks and inspiration for adventures, locations, and NPCs. *Sharn: City of Towers* releases this month.

UNDEFEATED #9

UNDEFEATED, the magazine for games you can win, rings in the holiday season with its second annual Holiday Gift Guide. The guide includes dozens of gift ideas for gamers like you and a ratings recap of every product ever reviewed by *UNDEFEATED*—over 200 products in all. Issue #9 also has feature-length strategy guides for *Warhammer 40,000 4th Edition* and the revised *Lord of the Rings TCG* game rules, plus winning tactics, decks, and armies for some of the hottest strategy games around.

AMAZING STORIES #605

Issue #605 of *AMAZING STORIES* presents a look at the upcoming *Star Wars* DVD collection, the *Frankenstein* TV series, and movie remakes. You'll also learn more from interviews with author Frederik Pohl and comics writer Geoff Johns, and new fiction by James Van Pelt, Gary K. Wolfe (creator of Roger Rabbit), Greg Stolze, Leslie What, and Jack Williamson. It's also crammed with tons of reviews and more!

GEEK CHIC

Show your gamer pride with a cool T-shirt. The folks at **jinx.com** offer a large selection of geeky gear, including a T-shirt with art by Erol Otis, who produced art for *Keep on the Borderlands*, the original *Deities and Demigods*, *Vault of the Drow*, and many other D&D products. Of course, if you don't like mixing religion and flippancy (let alone religion, flippancy, and D&D), you might want to steer clear of Otis's offering and aim for some of the other cool stuff on the site.

CCG MEETS RPG

The unfortunately entitled Gamecube game, *Baten Kaitos: Eternal Wings*, releases this month. Baten Kaitos is a star in the Cetus constellation, which is also known as the whale or the sea monster. Astrologically speaking, the star has the influence of causing change or misfortune, and the constellation causes laziness. What does that have to do with the game? We have no idea, but the game looks cool.

Like most non-D&D fantasy RPGs out for consoles now, the game has an anime style, but unlike most games out there, *Baten Kaitos* presents a new way of resolving combat. Instead of button mashing or choosing an attack from a menu, your character is dealt a hand of cards, which you combine to make attack combos. Cards you collect during the game add to your arsenal of combinations, giving you more options and unique ways to play.

HANDCRAFTED HATS

Get a hat to go with your gamer shirt! The hats offered by **genkigang.com** might not scream D&D, but many of them are cool, especially if you like anime. Of course, your opinion of what's cool and society's might not sync up, so guard yourself against games of keep-away. The website shows plenty of pretty people wearing the hats and looking happy. If they can get away with it, why not you?

DUNGEON THIS MONTH

DUNGEON #116

Glance thirty years into the past with "The 30 Greatest D&D Adventures of All Time." Every player and DM has favorites, and we've compiled a list of classic adventures with help from an all-star panel of judges including Ed Greenwood, Christopher Perkins, Bruce Cordell, and Monte Cook! "Dungeoncraft" and the Campaign Workbook offer more helpful suggestions for your game, and Wil Wheaton lets us in on one of his earliest D&D memories. Plus "Mt. Zogon," "Downer," and these great adventures:

Palace of the Twisted King

by Phillip Larwood

A blistering sandstorm finally breaks, revealing a moribund ruin long shrouded by the desert sands. Its crumbling walls might provide respite from the terrible winds, but the keep's ancient meenlock master has a special bed for visitors—his grisly operating table. An adventure for 5th-level characters.

The Death of Lashimire

by Tim Hitchcock

The infamous psion Lashimire is dead, leaving an undefended fortress ripe for looting. However, the PCs soon discover they aren't the only ones after Lashimire's fabled treasure when they begin to encounter bands of githyanki in search of a missing crystal sword. A psionics adventure for 12th-level characters.

Asylum

by Christopher Perkins

In the final chapter of the Shackled City Adventure Path, the heroes abandon the Material Plane to seek out a demon lord imprisoned in a bizarre asylum on the Prison Plane of Carceri. There they do battle with surviving Cagewrights, duplicitous demodands, and the mad Adimarchus himself. A Shackled City Adventure Path adventure for 19th-level characters.

LETTERS

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**. Please include your name, city, and state.

Essential Reading

I've been reading *Dragon* since issue #18, which I suppose dates me rather effectively. I have a large collection of *Dragons* sitting prominently in my game room upon the same shelves that my first, second, and third edition D&D collections reside. Most of the magazines have been rescues from past game friends who have for one reason or another decided to retire from our hobby and who had intended on discarding their materials. A few are purchases I've made myself. Yet throughout all the years that I've been gaming and reading your magazine, I've not subscribed. I haven't seen consistent content that made me feel that this was an essential part of my gaming experience—entertaining at times, often informative, but not what I would call essential.

However, after reading issue #323, that might have changed. I'm impressed not only with the new layout and the focus on general gaming as opposed to targeting any one of the D&D game worlds, but the article on Western vs. Eastern medieval swordplay was brilliant. I have a player who declared months ago that he intends to use the force mage prestige class, and the new force spells in this issue are going to be . . . well, essential. If I enjoy next month's issue as much as I enjoyed this issue, and you commit long term to this new format, I will purchase a two-year subscription in October.

James Beadle
Address withheld

This One's for You

Issue #323 was the single most useful issue of *Dragon ever*—at least for me. I'm running a "Knights of Seven Sin" campaign; you have seven sins. I'm starting a Final Fantasy campaign; you put something in about that! I have a campaign that includes both samurai and typical fighters. Yep, "Samurai Vs. Knight!" To top it all off, I've *always* wanted more force spells! This is just incredible. I think I'll keep subscribing to *Dragon* for a long time.

Thomas Barry
Detroit, MI

Grudge Match

The article entitled "Samurai vs. Knight" had a few things going against it. First, articles that are apparently paid for by the word have a tendency to be repetitive, overly long and very boring. The article was full of "what-ifs" that led nowhere. Also, to end the article without answering it's own question (who would win) is a major cop-out on the writer's part.

As a practitioner of kendo since high school and a sabre fencer, I've had my own share of SCA-type battles. I've never lost against the sword and shield, and yes, to even it out I have used both katana and wakizashi.

I now teach sabre at a local community college and kendo in my backyard, and when one is pitted against the other, the kendo stylist usually wins.

Dan Longoria
Olney, IL

Einstein vs. Hawking

I am very disappointed with John Clements' article in *Dragon* #323 regarding who would win in a fight between a samurai and a knight. The seven-page article analyzed the two very different fighting styles and the weapon systems, but it had nothing to do with gaming.

I cannot stress enough that articles should be appropriate to the publication—in this case gaming articles. Your readership might be mostly male and growing older, but that does not mean that you should include articles on prostate exams or pension plans in *Dragon*, even if written by such greats as Monte Cook or Robin D. Laws.

My final objection is that the article was plainly ludicrous. It lent itself to other irrelevant and hypothetical debates such as "Who would win in a bar fight? Albert Einstein or Stephen Hawking?" (Well, Al could swing his own beer mug, but Stephen would probably be sober and driving his nifty power chair.)

Ali R. Samiian
Jacksonville, FL

Summer School

I really enjoyed reading *Dragon* #323. I liked how you organized the magazine. I especially liked the article, "Samurai Vs. Knight." I wasn't expecting to learn much this summer, but this article changed that! I learned things I never knew about swords, armor, and the warriors themselves. It definitely changed my views about medieval knights. Thanks for such a great issue and keep up the good work!

Isaac Oderberg
Address withheld

Our Grotesque Masthead

I looked at the Paizo website to find out more about the new *Dungeon* and *Dragon* magazine formats. I was hoping to find out, with the cessation of *Polyhedron*, if *Dungeon* will still have stuff for Star Wars and d20 Modern. I didn't see any info. That said, I was

disappointed to see the rather poor new title font to be used. The old font was the best either magazine ever had. The new font looks far less enticing. I guess some things can't last forever—lets hope the new font doesn't either!

Nick Lowson
Address withheld

Sean Glenn, Senior Art Director for DRAGON *and* DUNGEON, *can best speak to this:*

First of all, the masthead is not a font. It's been tweaked from several existing sources to create a new design. In doing so, we identified areas where the old mastheads (including previous mastheads through the years for both DRAGON *and* DUNGEON*) were lacking both impact and readability.*

The new mastheads approach these problems with bold, decisive forms. The basic shapes came from the Grotesque and Egyptian lettering styles of nineteenth century England, with hints toward older Humanist and Calligraphic forms. We feel the new masthead has a modern look, with some hints to the past. The main goal, however, was to make the masthead stand out on the newsstand, where the objective is to grab a browser's attention and get him or her to open up the magazine.

All it takes to see the wisdom of this decision is to take a brief glance at the newsstand. Every best-selling magazine uses its masthead to catch your eye. We're now doing the same.

TAKE THEM TO THE DUNGEON!

Why do I have to buy two magazines to get what I used to get from one? Is this some ploy to increase Paizo's bottom line? Moving content from *DRAGON*, which I buy, to *DUNGEON*, which I don't have much interest in, seems to be for the purpose of increasing *DUNGEON*'s smaller circulation.

Please leave the DM-only content in *DRAGON*. It is a shame you are making this change. Paizo has come so far since taking over, although a lot of articles are somewhat long-winded.

Willis Buhl
Address withheld

Yes, we made the changes to make the magazines more successful. However, the magazines won't become more profitable by alienating DRAGON*'s DM readers and making them buy* DUNGEON*. That just shifts our readers around. We want to increase readership of both magazines. To do that, we've made* DRAGON *more valuable to all D&D players, whether they DM or not, and we've turned* DUNGEON *into the ultimate source for DMs.* DUNGEON *will be printing the "Dungeoncraft" column, but* DRAGON *still offers DMs great material every month. The rules elements in* DRAGON *like spells, magic items, feats, and new races remain tremendously useful to DMs, and* DRAGON *continues to print other articles handy to DMs, such as articles that present monsters, roleplaying advice, character creation tools, inspiration for adventure plots and villains, background information about monsters and races, campaign and adventure information, setting detail, and more.*

We sympathize with your sentiment that DRAGON *has printed some overly long articles. That's one of the reasons why* DRAGON *has its new format. With more shorter articles in the magazine, readers can find something to interest them in every issue.*

DRAGON'S BIZARRE PAST

For starters, I really enjoy the magazine. Recently, I noticed that articles that fit into the category of "Bazaar of the Bizarre" haven't had that title. Will I never again see an article with the "Bazaar of the Bizarre" title? I hope not.

I also wanted to say thanks for putting the ecology articles back in the magazine. With that said, will I ever see another ecology article with the monster hunters? I always enjoyed those a lot. Keep up the good work!

Jeff
Address withheld

Sorry, Jeff. We have no plans to return to the title "Bazaar of the Bizarre" or the monster hunters in "Ecology." Although both have a long history with the magazine, both have appeared rarely in recent years. That makes the "Bazaar of the Bizarre" title for magic items articles less useful as an indicator to readers about what they're looking at when they open the magazine to such articles. We felt

CLOUD KINGDOM

Cloud Kingdom Games

This issue's Riddle:

A prisoner he might appear,
Not gagged but strongly bound.
Forced to tell his tale again,
He does and makes no sound.
His questioner just sits and stares
And nothing's ever heard.
He's then released because in truth,
He's told them every word

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For more riddles and games visit us at www.cloudkingdom.com

DRAGON MESSAGEBOARDS

Dragon Talk

Paizo.com has a new look! Along with being more accessible and getting an overall makeover, the new website has forums for *Dragon* and all of Paizo Publishing's other magazines. Have a question or comment about something you've read in *Dragon*? Want to learn more about what's in store for the magazine? Need to request a particular article or just want to say "hi" to the *Dragon* staff? Drop by the *Dragon* messageboards and make sure you're heard! Just visit **paizo.com/dragon/messageboards.**

"Magic Shop" is self-explanatory and serves that purpose better. The "Ecology" articles now follow a format similar to the most recent ecologies before issue #323, giving far more information about the monster than the old story-and-footnote format (see the next letter response for a longer explanation).

Ecology of the Ecology

I just wanted to drop you a line and say thanks for the wonderful magazine over the last few years and thanks to Paizo for keeping up a great tradition. Since you have taken over publishing duties, the magazine has improved every month. I have one suggestion, though: Bring back the monster ecologies like the ones that featured the monster hunters society from issues like #266, #267, and *Dragon Annual* #4. I miss those. The new ones are good, but they are more or less glorified *Monster Manual* entries. I loved the story aspect and couldn't wait until the next installment to see what Shandrilla and her companions got into next. The story aspect of it sort of helped stimulate roleplaying as it gave examples of creature-PC interaction. I'd love to see it make a comeback, and even though I'm no professional writer, I'd even think of giving it a shot. It might be fun. Anyway, mad props for the great magazine every month. I look forward to finding it in the mailbox. Thanks a million, guys.

Matthew Robbins
Clinton, TN

Monster entries in previous editions of the game provided a lot of information about a creature's habits and life cycle. This left little room for the ecology articles to expand on that information, and often such articles gave monsters new abilities that affected how they worked in combat, essentially changing the monster. While the old style of ecology article entertained, they rarely offered more than footnotes about their focus creature.

The new ecology articles use the room provided by the monster descriptions to give more useful information about a monster. They don't change a monster's abilities, and they offer strategies for both players and DMs. The cool details the articles can reveal about a monster serve to inspire plots and roleplaying without devoting many pages to fiction that many readers didn't find useful.

We Choked

Hi there! In *Dragon* #323, "The Ecology of Chokers" included some false information. The choker didn't debut in the Mystara appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium*. It was actually introduced a full six years earlier, in *Gaz6: The Dwarves of Rockhome*. Granted, the Mystara appendix was its first description using the second edition rules, but now that there's only one D&D game (combining the best features of AD&D and the old Basic/Expert system), the Known World's classic critters and concepts deserve to be recognized for their true, vintage origins!

S. Dornhoff
Address withheld

Via the Internet

I was just wondering what the deal is with all the "address withheld" notes in "Scale Mail." Are that many writers paranoid about disclosing their locations? If they are emailing, why not "via internet" or something?

Dennis Beebe
West Trenton, NJ

We like to mention city and state of letter writers to give you a sense of the great community of D&D players out there, but some folks neglect to mention where they reside. All our "Scale Mail" letters come to us via email, and "address withheld" seems better than having some letters ascribed to a name alone.

Like a Pan to the Face

When I bought the *Eberron Campaign Setting* today, I had never bought a campaign before in my fifteen years of playing D&D, and until the June issue of *Dragon*, I had not intended to. "Wyrm's Turn" in that issue changed my mind. I consider myself adept at the classic Tolkien style of fantasy, and I had never needed a helping hand in the past. Like many old players, I sneered at the idea of trains and powered cities in a campaign and did not think much of the idea behind Eberron.

In that editorial you explained the "why" behind Eberron. You talked about new players and younger audiences. You stated that, "The definition of fantasy is changing." This reasoning was like a pan to the face for me. Why not trains and powered cities? Why not a new world that is outside of classic fantasy? Why not new and why not more? Third edition D&D is so much more versatile than the crazy hodgepodge that was second edition, and lends itself to new ideas. Why not take advantage of them?

So I bought it, and it has been worth every penny.

Kyle Harman
Birmingham, AL

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Who are you who can summon fire without flint or tinder?

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THE CLASSIC CONUNDRUM

Matthew Sernett is quite right in his editorial in *DRAGON* #321 that D&D needs new players, but I disagree strongly with him and with Jason Rekker's letter in issue #322 in believing that revising fantasy is a way of attracting those who will stick with the hobby.

Portraying characters with facial piercings, spiky hair, and punkish dress might lure a few teens who find that look cool, but fashion is ephemeral, and soon that vogue will pass. When it does, those gamers who started playing D&D because of it will abandon their *Player's Handbooks* as quickly as their tongue studs. What then? Will D&D keep following the latest sartorial trends?

When I started playing D&D over twenty-one years ago, the game didn't try to pander to fashion. That was during the hobby's heyday when the game experienced phenomenal growth. Part of the attraction of D&D back then was that it was based on a fantasy with near-universal appeal. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson's genius wasn't in redefining fantasy; it was in allowing you for the first time to be directly involved in it. The reason that D&D succeeded while competing roleplaying games foundered was that the fantasy upon which D&D was based was already familiar to so many people. You didn't need to be told that the guy with the pointy hat could cast spells or the knight in shining armor was a friend.

Perhaps surprisingly, I welcome the EBERRON setting. I hope it acts as a repository for all the scientific and mundane elements that have crept into D&D, such as dungeonpunk, techno-magic, and psionics. That would leave the rest of D&D to those of us who appreciate classic fantasy. Ultimately, it is through us, not the fickle revisionists, that D&D will thrive over the next three decades.

Dr. Alexander F. Simkin
London, England

Thanks for your thoughts, Alexander.

We agree more than you might think. You're absolutely correct that D&D relies on the appeal of hooking people into a fantasy they already know. My point in the editorial was that the youth of today share a common knowledge of fantasy that is different from what we grew up with. Their foundation isn't Conan, King Arthur, and Tolkien; it's Final Fantasy and Harry Potter.

It's not about fashion; it's about where the genre of fantasy is going. Sci-fi has changed enormously over the past thirty years due to the development of the genre and changes in our society. Is it so odd to think the same could happen to fantasy?

We do differ quite markedly in our opinions of what will keep the hobby alive, though. You've been playing D&D for twenty-one years, but the die-hard gamers like you and I do stop playing (and more importantly for the continuation of the hobby, stop buying products), and even if we don't stop playing, we eventually die. Younger people tend to be more active as players, buyers, and recruiters for the game, so it's important to the hobby that they become involved.

The danger D&D faces is that people of all ages can become directly involved in fantasy in far more ways than were available twenty or thirty years ago. As time goes on, the online environment will offer better, more sociable, and more customizable options. To survive in the future, D&D must draw in not a few teens but hundreds of thousands of them—continually. Each new generation must take up the game.

I'll be happily playing D&D when I'm in a retirement home, but I'll be happier if the teenagers I'll be complaining about play too. I'll be happier still if we both play the same edition of the game; then I can invite them to share a few raucous hours playing the best game in the world.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK ANSWER

Answer: There are some who call me . . . Tim.

BLAST FROM THE PAST: X2: CASTLE AMBER (CHATEAU D'AMBERVILLE)

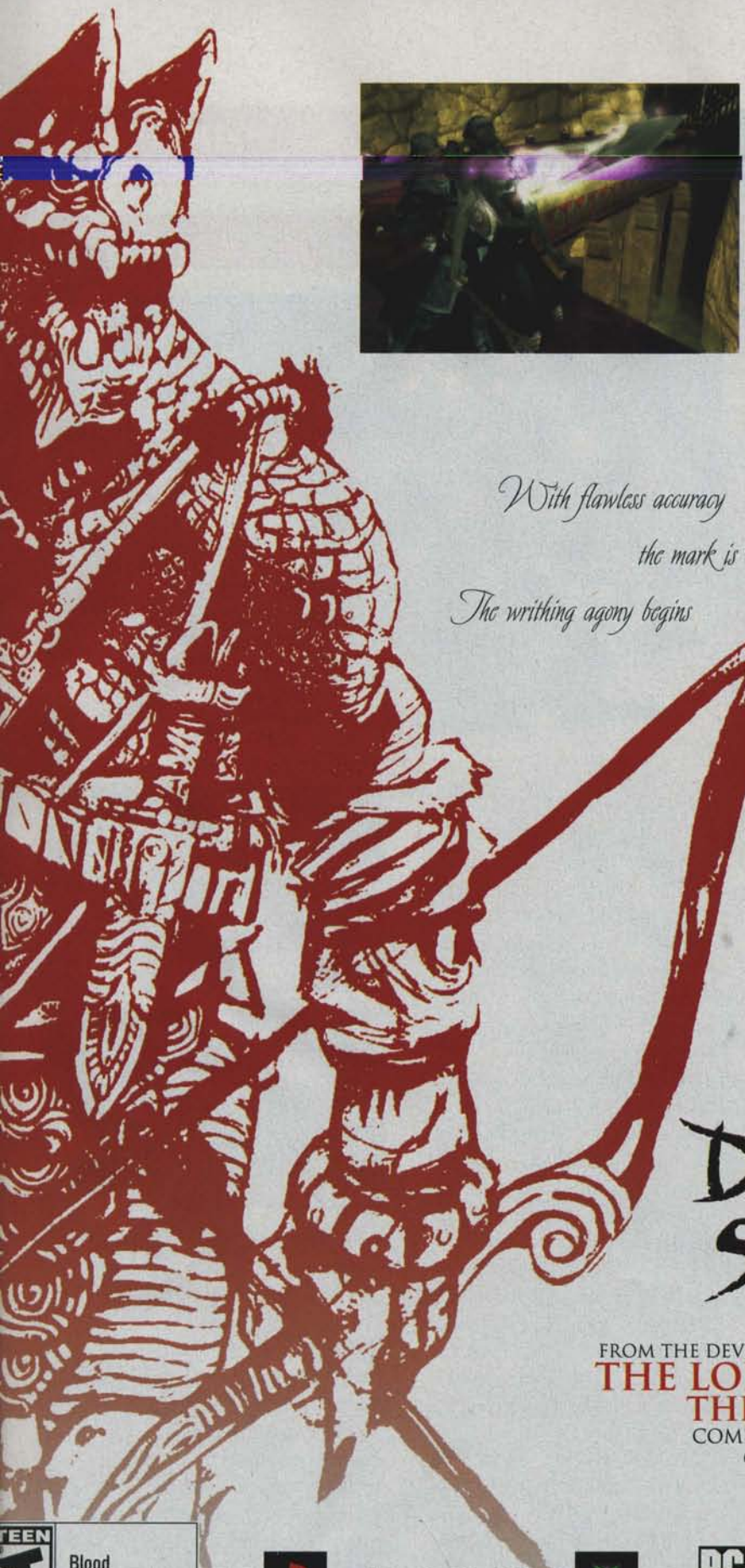
Although not quite as prestigious as its famed predecessor, *X1: The Isle of Dread*, 1981's *X2: Castle Amber* did provide a few things that longtime players fondly (or not-so-fondly) recall. This adventure, intended for use with the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Expert Set*, introduced to D&D the Lovecraft-inspired neh-thalggu (brain collector), the dog-headed lupin, and the magically-constructed magen. The adventure provided several handouts, including one perforated for removal from the last page with a pronunciation guide on one side and a player handout on the other.

The adventure began with the PCs magically transported to Averoigne—a world based on historical France—trapped just outside the Chateau d'Amberville by a deadly fog. With no other choice but to explore the mysterious castle, the characters faced a number of bizarre non-sequitur encounters. From the dining room scene (make sure to try the soup) to the Wild Hunt (where did these lupins and rakasta come from?), *Castle Amber* never stopped supplying memorable surprises. Ultimately though, the plot involved the party finding a number of items and using them to summon the Tomb of Stephen Amber and releasing him, thereby also releasing themselves.

If you get a chance to visit *Castle Amber*, you most certainly should go. Just stay away from that wily Eraro. . . .

See this issue's "Winning Races" for an update of the lupin.

For a more thorough look at the beginning of this series, check out *DUNGEON* #114 for the return of the Isle of Dread. Not only does this issue detail the prehistoric island like never before, but it also includes a full-color poster map of the entire region and presents a new adventure set in the classic locale.



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PlayStation.2 XBOX PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE STORMFRONT STUDIOS ATARI

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THE SCOOP ON GAMER LIFE

TAKE THE INITIATIVE

The U.S. has its presidential elections this month, so if you're able to vote, get out to the polls. Take a look at the last four years and figure out if you want things to continue as they are or if you want them to change, and vote.

Of course, the U.S. uses the Electoral College system, making your opinion not count if your state goes the other way, and yes, someone can be elected who doesn't win the popular vote. Yet if you don't vote, you make certain that your opinion doesn't count, and you never know—you could live in the next Florida.

WHO IS THIS GUY?

It's the Mad Irishman made up as an Andorian from Star Trek. How mad is this Irishman? He's designed dozens of character sheets for over twenty game systems, from *Ars Magica* to *TORG*, and put them all up as free downloads on his website, **mad-irishman.net**. Of course, the Mad Irishman (A.K.A. Patrick Murphy, Ph. D.) presents several D&D character sheets for the various editions of the game. If that's not enough reason to check out his website, the Mad Irishman also offers cool gamer T-shirts and other gaming paraphernalia through **cafepress.com**.

D&D BOARD GAME

No, it's not the *D&D Basic Game*. In 2003, Hasbro UK released a D&D board game. The game didn't use D&D rules; instead, it used a game mechanic and play style similar to the *HeroQuest* game of 1992. The board game came with forty miniatures (not painted) and five double-sided, full-color dungeon tiles with 1-inch squares. As with *HeroQuest*, the game gained greater versatility and fun with a supporting release: Published in May of 2004, *Eternal Winter* offered two double-sided tiles and nine miniatures, including a clear plastic ice dragon.

Unfortunately, the game wasn't released in the U.S., and it won't be. Its very non-D&D game mechanics make it a poor choice for building the D&D brand—a role the D&D miniatures game plays much better. On the up side, its appearance provoked Wizards of the Coast into creating the *D&D Basic Game*.

Of course, the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Board Game* has its fans. Check out **danddbordspel.tk** to learn more about the game and see some great fan support for it. The website even offers some dungeon tiles that work

for D&D play (above). If you don't mind navigating a page in German, go to **danddgame.de**, and click on "*DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* Werbespot" to see a commercial for the game complete with actors portraying orcs and adventurers!

If the thought of dungeon tiles makes you salivate, try a web search for the *HeroQuest*, *Advanced HeroQuest*, and *Warhammer Quest* board games. Each game has many fan websites, and most offer free downloads of fan-designed dungeon tiles.

GEN CON SO CAL

Sunny Anaheim, California hosts the second Gen Con So Cal next month. The convention is sure to be a big hit again this year. Last year, 4,725 people attended, making it the third largest gaming convention. Only Gen Con and Origins are bigger. That makes Gen Con So Cal bigger than MAGIC Grand Prix.

So, what conclusion should we draw from this data?

Clearly, D&D is better than MAGIC.

RPGA UPDATE

by Ian Richards,
RPGA Program Manager

When you join the RPGA, registration is totally free, and you amass reward points every time you participate in RPGA-sanctioned games. When event results are reported to RPGA HQ via the Internet, your points are recorded in the RPGA database. Your points continue to accumulate over a four-month duration, and at the end of each duration, your point total is used to determine your rewards, and then you get free stuff. Of course, GMs and players have different needs. Therefore the RPGA sends different free stuff to suit their needs and the games they play.

Player Loot

Players earn points toward Campaign Cards, which are full-color, collectable, gaming cards granting unique character creation and play possibilities within RPGA campaign games. For every twenty points players accrue, they earn a randomly selected Campaign Card from the current set. If they have points remaining after their rewards are determined, those points roll forward and count toward future mailings and more free stuff.

GM Hoards

GMs earn points for running games, and those points translate into special game templates, RPGA exclusive D&D miniatures, and *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Miniatures* expansion packs. For every twenty points earned, GMs capture more treasure from the current hoard. Just like with the players, points remaining after rewards are determined roll forward to the next duration.

What's a Point?

Players and GMs both use the same method to determine the value of their points earned, but we track GM and player point totals separately. Also, point values vary for different types of adventures. Following is a list of the standard point awards for adventures, as well as special point modifiers for playing at select events.

4 Points: Legacy of the Green Regent

2 Points: LIVING GREYHAWK Cores, LIVING FORCE, Classics Adventures, Sanctioned *DUNGEON* Adventures

1 Point: All other RPGA-sanctioned play

×2: Winter Fantasy, Gen Con Indy, Spring Revel Down Under, Gen Con So Cal, Origins, Gen Con UK

For example, playing or GMing a Legacy of the Green Regent session normally earns four reward points. At Winter Fantasy, that session earns the lucky players and GMs eight reward points!

The RPGA rewards those playing at home, but we like to give greater rewards to those who support the shows that celebrate the hobby. Like all of our adventuring characters, we'd like players to also adventure forth and make new friends, swap epic stories, and play some unique games.

As a bonus reward for reaching their first benchmark of twenty player points, players qualify for a special membership card. Featuring cool artwork, this card identifies them as active D&D Rewards participants.

Now having given players a cool membership card, what about those hard-working wonder workers, the GMs? Starting at Master Level, GMs receive a premium card for reaching their first twenty-point benchmark at each GM level. In addition to its increased durability and cool art, a GM premium card prominently features a GM's Level. There's no game effect, but use your bragging rights for a +10 on Diplomacy checks between sessions—just don't expect special treatment at the concession stand.

Bonus Free Stuff

If this wasn't enough, from time to time the RPGA sends out bonus rewards as a special thanks to members. In 2003 it was Con-in-a-Box—the grab bag of goodies that most conventions hand out but mailed direct from Wizards of the Coast. Being an RPGA member, you never know when you'll have the opportunity to rip open a package and discover something new and cool to add to your game or character.

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by Ben Vandgrift
images provided by Wizards of the Coast

THE CHALLENGE CAMPAIGN

Bone Devil

Both the *Miniatures Handbook* and the *Dungeons & Dragons Miniatures* starter packs outline rules for skirmish campaigns: a series of battles with a continuing score. However, a deep divide exists between skirmishing and a role-playing campaign—skirmish campaigns rarely tell a story.

Enter the challenge campaign, a different kind of continuing campaign for D&D miniatures. In the challenge campaign, a string of challenge skirmishes revolve around a continuing story arc. Much like the skirmish campaign, the challenge campaign allows players to compete against each other in a series of skirmishes, advance their commanders, and track their scores. The main difference is that a hosting player or DM arranges and controls the campaign.

CAMPAIGN SCENARIOS

In essence, challenge skirmishes are much like normal *Dungeons & Dragons Miniatures* skirmish games but with a related story. The host player defines a scenario and a number of other players work to complete it. The host controls all variables in the game, save for the challenging players' warbands.

A scenario for a challenge campaign follows this pattern: One player hosts as DM for the entire campaign, and two or more players join the scenario. Whereas a normal skirmish game might have variable victory conditions, scenarios in a challenge campaign concern themselves with a number of specific goals, which determine a player's score. Finally, goals are defined within the scenario in order to develop an overall story and determine the direction of the campaign.

SETTING UP

Before beginning, the DM of a challenge campaign needs to decide the campaign story's direction and object of the campaign. The level of detail or difficultly of these specifics is left up to the DM's and players' tastes.

GOALS

The two most common objects of a challenge campaign are victory points and story advancement. Each player starts with a score of 50, and gains or loses points depending on what type of campaign the DM chooses.

Before beginning play, the DM and players should agree on the target score required to win the campaign, usually being 100, 150, or 200. The first player to reach the target score wins the campaign.

Points: In a challenge campaign, the object of a scenario is to accrue victory points by eliminating enemy creatures, whether they belong to opposing players or to the DM. The player with the most victory points at the end of the scenario wins and gains the benefits of that scenario. This is the simplest objective, and the easiest to build scenarios for.

Tordek

Tasks: A campaign tracking story tasks is different than one that revolves around victory points. The number of tasks a player accomplishes determines whether he wins or loses a scenario. The player completing the most or most important tasks wins and takes away the spoils from that challenge. A DM should give careful thought to the weight of particular tasks when building a task-based scenario to make sure this method remains as fair and decisive as a point-based scenario.

Combination: For a more thorough scoring method, the DM might want to combine both point and task scoring objectives. Victory points using this method are tracked for defeated foes and score bonuses are awarded for accomplishing set tasks. What determines the winner of a particular scenario can change within the campaign, from tasks to victory points, and certain benefits tied to particular tasks or point totals. Players in a combination might increase their score very quickly, so a higher score is recommended.

Warlords and Warbands

As in skirmish campaigns, warbands in a challenge campaign consist of 50 points worth of figures, led by a warlord of no more than 25 points. Warbands operate under the same restrictions as in skirmish campaigns, and their warlords' alignments determine which factions the warbands represent. Should a player have no creature with a Commander rating within the 25-point limit, a non-commander figure may be designated as a 0-level commander, provided that it costs 25 points or less. This creature gains no Commander Effect.

The Challenge Round

A challenge campaign plays exactly as a skirmish campaign and lasts until a warband reaches the target score or completes a specific task determined by the story arc. Upon completing a round, players accrue the following benefits.

Scoring: If the object of the campaign is victory points, the winner's score increases by 5 for each opposing player in the round. In a combined or task-based game, players gain bonuses to their score based on the tasks they completed in the scenario. This usually means awarding 5 points for every objective a warband completes, although a DM might decide that completing certain tasks warrants more points.

Advancement: After a warband wins a challenge round, the participating warbands gain experience and the spoils of its victory using the Victory and Loss and Warlord Advancement rules on page 112 of the *Miniatures Handbook*. The DM may adjust these changes as suits the campaign or the events in the completed round. Non-standard 0-level commanders advance in the same manner as normal commanders, but never gain a Commander Effect.

Lidda

Magic Items: The winner of each challenge round gains a magic item he may assign according to the guidelines on page 113 of the *Miniature's Handbook*. He may also select one magic item carried by a creature from each opponent's warband, and roll 1d20. On a roll of 16 or more, the player destroys that magic item. Losing players also have a 50% chance to gain a random magic item, determined using the charts on pages 114-116 of the *Miniatures Handbook*. The DM might also tie gaining magic items to particular tasks within a scenario. Any warband that completes a task with an associated magic item gains that item.

Mialee

Between Rounds

Everything about a warband might change between rounds. Warlords might change, warbands reconfigured, and magic items reassigned, just as noted in the rules for a skirmish campaign. However, certain aspects of the challenge campaign's storyline might prevent specific changes between rounds. Such specific restrictions are determined by the DM to represent integral aspects of an ongoing story.

Changing Warlords: Between rounds, players have the option to change warlords as in a normal skirmish campaign. However, many challenge campaigns focus on a warband's commander as being a focal character, thus making her presence integral to each battle. To represent this, the DM might rule that warband commanders cannot be switched or that players must use a certain commander for specific scenarios.

Reinforcements: Reinforcements might arrive between rounds, either because the story arc demands it, or because a player's score reaches an advancement threshold. Once any player's score reaches 75 points, all players increase their warbands' sizes to 100 points. At a score of 125, warbands grow to 200 points, and at 175, warbands increase to 250 points. DMs may adjust these advancement thresholds or deny players reinforcements as dictated by the campaign's storyline. A series of scenarios taking place in a secluded area might prevent reinforcements from arriving

Jozan

for several rounds if at all. Alternatively, the DM can decide that only specific models may be added. For example, since a scenario takes place deep underground, only drow, duergar, umber hulks and other Underdark denizens may be added to warbands.

New Players: Incoming players might join the campaign between rounds. New players most commonly begin with a score of either 50 points or 10 points fewer than the lowest current player. As always, the DM may adjust this starting score as dictated by the ongoing storyline.

Building a Scenario

Scenarios for a challenge campaign resemble scenes from a roleplaying game. The DM determines the story and defines a few possible outcomes. Unlike a roleplaying session, the DM designs all of the action within a scenario in advance. Changing a scenario on the fly often risks giving an unfair advantage to one player and should be avoided. A DM should consider the following aspects of a scenario when designing a challenge campaign.

Story: By design, a round within a challenge campaign tells a simple story, one told as the scenario plays out. A DM should avoid creating a challenge that tries to do too much. Rather DMs should divide complicated scenarios into simpler ones that take place over several rounds. More than three story tasks give a scenario a disorganized, frantic feel and often cause players to lose track of their goals. Thus, rather than having a warband lay siege to an orc barricade, kill its leader, find his magic armor, and discover the route to the orc outpost, try spreading out these goals out over four rounds.

Harpy

Enemies: A scenario might rely on DM-controlled creatures to square off against the players. If so, any creatures the players eliminate provide points as normal. DMs should carefully balance the strength of the creatures they control against that of the participating warbands. The combined point value of all DM controlled creatures should be no more than 150% of the players' limits, or 100% if the creatures benefit from a particularly strong or useful commander.

Skirmish Variants and Tasks: Many of the skirmish variants listed in chapter 5 of the *Miniatures Handbook* work well as elements of a challenge round. Use these variants as guidelines for building special rules into your own challenges or developing story tasks. The DM should assign each task in the scenario a value of 5, 10, or 15 points based on its difficulty and importance in the story arc. For players who complete these tasks, their score increases by the associated value.

Terrain and Exits: Terrain deserves special attention, as the players in a challenge campaign never choose their terrain. The DM might decide on an odd terrain with difficult to access or unevenly spaced exit corners. In such cases, the DM should provide one exit area of five squares and a designated assembly area for each player in the scenario. Players roll terrain initiative normally and set up their warband in the exit areas of their choice on their turn.

The Pitch: When the DM finishes designing a scenario, he should devise a title and description for it that conveys the backstory, goals, and related tasks. This pitch might also hint at rewards for specific tasks, if the scenario calls for it. The DM presents this description to the players before they enter the scenario.

Story Path: A challenge campaign requires a simple and flexible story arc that lends itself well to dungeon skirmishing. Any faction should be able to claim victory and the challenges shouldn't consistently favor one group over another. The DM in a challenge campaign also works as the referee and should present a story that allows all players to participate equally.

This isn't to say that a victory in a scenario can't give one player an advantage. A branching story path, even if mostly linear, makes for a more satisfying bridge between the skirmish game and the roleplaying game. The campaign's story can fork in places, giving victorious players some decision-making power as to what direction the story goes. These decisions should be clearly defined, having only two or three options.

Gargoyle

Remember that a challenge campaign isn't a roleplaying game, so minor discrepancies in continuity are rarely critical.

Story Arc: The Lost Labyrinth

The Lost Labyrinth is a simple story arc for a challenge campaign. It provides a flexible framework adaptable to most scenarios and requires little to get underway. The DM can decide whether the object of the campaign is score or story-related, or a combination of both.

History

Centuries ago, a senseless war devastated the region, costing many lives and heavily taxing each land's resources. After decades of battle, a celestial object called a wandering star passed through the sky, causing

Regdar, Human Hunter

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Blood
Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Violence

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foul weather, splitting the earth, and disrupting the power of the mighty magical artifacts used in the war effort.

Unable to continue, the nations used this opportunity to forge the Accords of Peace, and constructed a great labyrinth where they locked away the magical artifacts of the war. Sealing all the labyrinth's entrances with stone and ice, its creators destroyed all documents related to the maze so none could ever uncover it. The Accords of Peace were written to last until the next wandering star appeared and since that time no nation has dared to wage war upon another.

Ogre Ravager

However, the appearance of another wandering star and the unpredictable effects it inspires have once again thrown the countryside into upheaval. While the star shines overhead, armies take to the field.

Sending their best agents, each kingdom seeks the entrance to the ancient labyrinth so they might recover the ancient magic stored therein. If any one kingdom recovers the potent magic locked within, the war and the region will be theirs to claim.

Goals

Warbands must recover ancient magic items from the Lost Labyrinth to send home to aid their country's war efforts. The campaign takes place in and around the Lost Labyrinth, with a player's warband representing agents of one of the warring kingdoms. The kingdom that succeeds in recovering the most artifacts from the labyrinth will ultimately win the war.

Scenarios

Dungeons & Dragons Miniatures works most easily with terrain and floor plans that might be found within a dungeon. Scenarios within this story arc preserve this model, revolving around opening doors into the labyrinth and finding artifacts within.

Challenge Scenario: The Goblins' Gate

Stories tell of a paranoid lich that once terrorized the region, using potent magical artifacts to bend the surrounding lands to his diabolical will. Fearing attack and betrayal from ever quarter he ordered his legion of undead slaves to build him a castle deep underground, where no army could ever hope to attack. However, while preoccupied with his lair's creation, a band of heroes slipped into the lich's lair and destroyed his phylactery, fulfilling his greatest fears.

Today, the lich's half-built fortress remains hidden deep beneath the earth, still filled with the arcane treasure he once used to torment the lands above. Recently, a particularly opportunistic tribe of goblins, enthused by the minor magic items they discovered nearby, has taken up residence in the ruins. Now they jealously guard the crumbling castle, hoping to uncover ever more useful and empowering magic.

This combined scenario works well with 2–3 players using 50-point warbands, and easily fits within the Lost Labyrinth story arc.

Pitch

Searches reveal an old castle wall and portcullis deep within the heart of the lands claimed by the vicious Khudruk goblin tribe. Your kingdom sends its special operations team to investigate, clear the area, and open the gate.

Vampire Aristocrat

Terrain

The terrain consists of a castle wall to the north, with three arrow slits atop it. Rubble and fallen boulders create a jagged bottleneck near the castle gate. Two steep climbs, one at either end of the wall lead to its top. Fields of large boulders at the south end of the field divide three player exits. The exit for the DM's creatures is a tunnel at the north of the field behind the wall.

Snig the Axe

DM Creatures

Arrange the following creatures at the center of the castle wall: Snig the Axe (Minions: 3 Goblin Skirmishers), two Goblin Warriors, and three Goblin Sneaks. Snig the Axe wields a Flaming Weapon (Melee Damage +5 fire).

Creature Tactics

As the players' warbands approach the gate, Snig the Axe and all the Goblins except the Goblin Sneaks descend to defend the gate. The Goblin Sneaks take positions at the arrow slits and fire upon the players' warbands.

Tasks

Along with scoring points from defeating enemy models, this scenario also hinges on two story goals. By destroying Snig the Axe players score an additional 5 points, while those who open the gate score an additional 10. To open the gate, a creature must take a standard action (replacing attacks) and succeed on a DC 16 save. A creature cannot open the gate if threatened.

Rewards

The warband that destroys Snig the Axe gains a Flaming Weapon (Damage +5 fire). Players completing story objectives also gain the associated bonus to their score. Any other benefits are rewarded normally.

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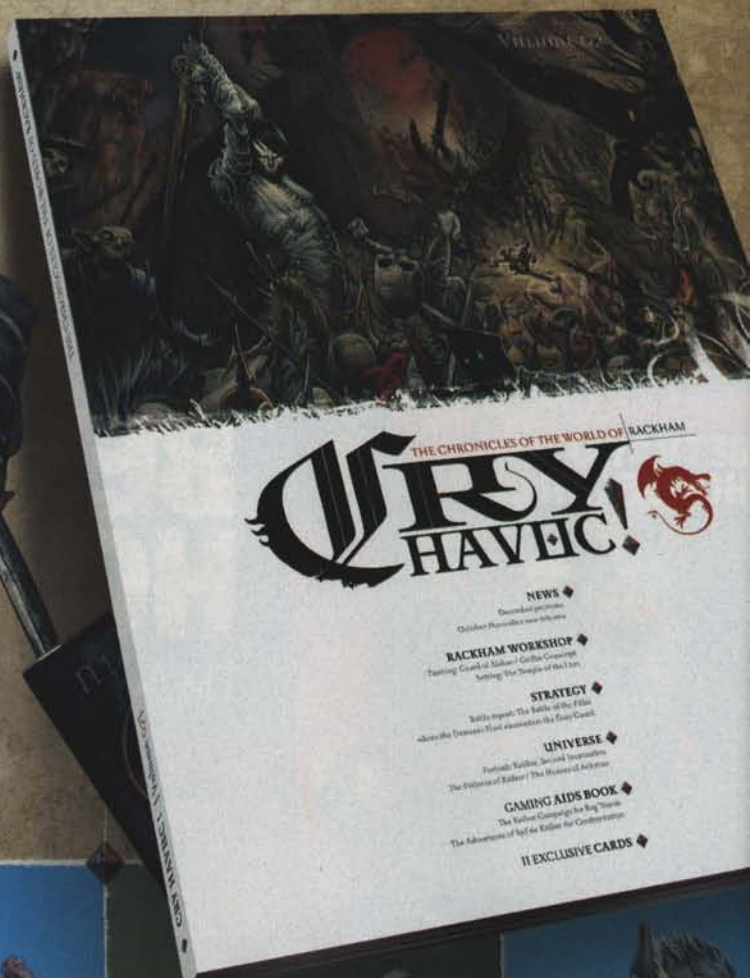

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by Clifford Horowitz
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Dungeon Siege

Dungeon Siege allows you to play alone or online with others using the same character in either version. The computer game features a simple, skill-based character system with skills that increase with use. Combined with intuitive combat options available for each character, *Dungeon Siege* allows you to manage a large party with only a slight learning curve.

The game features some of the best parts of kick-in-the-door dungeon crawling, with plenty of chances for combat and a large number of sites to plunder. The game is also filled with NPCs who want nothing more than to join you in the stomping, allowing you to assemble a party with nearly any mix of talent you could desire.

In addition to encountering a large variety of allies, your travels also grant you great amounts of equipment. While it's always neat to find a better magic sword, *Dungeon Siege* includes the idea of kit items to make equipment more interesting. Kit items grow more powerful as you accumulate items in the set, much like the magic item sets described in *Dragon* #314's "Silicon Sorcery" about *Heroes of Might and Magic IV*.

The game deals with spells in an even more interesting way. Each spell counts as its own small piece of equipment that needs to be loaded into a spellbook to use. While most spellbooks are nothing more than containers for spell scrolls, some of them grant bonuses as long as your character equips them. These items provide the inspiration for the magic spellbooks described in this article.

Synergistic Spellbooks

Several synergistic spellbooks exist, and each is a unique minor artifact. A synergistic spellbook functions on its simplest level as a mere spellbook that any wizard can prepare from. The magic of a synergistic spellbook shows any wizard who looks through it the formulas for spells in the wizard's own handwriting and notation system. This allows the wizard to memorize spells from a synergistic spellbook without the aid of *read magic* or the need of a Spellcraft check. Thus, multiple wizards can easily prepare spells from the same synergistic spellbook.

These tomes provide other, greater powers as well. The first wizard to prepare spells from a synergistic spellbook in each 24-hour period gains certain special abilities based on the total number of spell levels prepared from the artifact. These special abilities last for 24 hours or until expended. The wizard prepares his spells as normal, but he must state which spells he prepares from the synergistic spellbook. Synergistic spellbooks hold 0-level spells, but they are too weak to activate the books' magic. Thus, 0-level spells don't count toward the wizard's total prepared spell levels.

Each synergistic spellbook's description has a table that lists the special abilities granted by the book for a range of prepared spell levels. As long as the caster maintains the minimum number of prepared spell levels listed on the table, he gains the ability listed on the table for that number of total spell levels and any abilities granted for having fewer total spell levels. As the wizard casts his prepared spells, the abilities available to him diminish commensurately. If the book grants a bonus, such bonuses follow the normal rules for stacking (or nonstacking) bonus types. If the book lists a spell as a special ability, the wizard may cast that spell the listed number of times as a spell-like ability with the caster level equal to that of the synergistic spellbook.

Treat the effects of these special abilities as if they were gained from an artifact-level magic item rather than from a spell. Thus, *dispel magic*

cannot remove a special ability or bonus granted by a synergistic spellbook, and *Mordenkainen's disjunction* only has a 1% chance per caster level of ending or removing the special ability. A wizard cannot add new spells to a synergistic spellbook.

Book of Elemental Attunement: This massive tome has constantly damp stone covers. Its pages feel warm to the touch, and if left unattended they tend to flutter as if in a slight breeze. A *book of elemental attunement* contains all sorcerer/wizard spells with the air, earth, fire, and water descriptors. Interspersed between the diagrams of spells are a number of treatises on the elemental planes and uses for the elements on the Material Plane. The *book of elemental attunement* telepathically whispers this knowledge to its carrier at all times (whether he has prepared any spells from it or not), granting her a +6 insight bonus on all Knowledge (the planes) checks regarding elementals or the elemental planes.

Preparing at least five levels worth of spells from the *book of elemental attunement* grants a wizard a swim speed equal to his base land speed. Preparing more spell levels from the book grants the use of spell-like abilities as previously described.

Overwhelming (all schools) [air, earth, fire, water]; CL 21st; Weight 15 lb.

Book of the Robust: Made of thin parchment held between plies of elaborately engraved balsa wood, this narrow book feels fragile and light in the hand. A *book of the robust* holds every sorcerer/wizard spell from the school of necromancy that doesn't have the death, evil, or fear descriptors, as well as all other spells of all schools from the sorcerer/wizard spell list with the good and light descriptors.

Preparing at least fourteen levels worth of spells from the *book of the robust* grants a wizard a number of temporary hit points as shown on the following table. The wizard only gains the number of temporary hit points listed for the number of spell levels he has prepared; the temporary hit point total is not cumulative. These temporary hit points last for 24 hours or until damage removes them. Preparing more spell levels from the book grants Fortitude save bonuses (also not cumulative) and spell-like abilities as previously described.

Strong conjuration; CL 18th; Weight 2 lb.

Book of Warding: This circular book has a leather-wrapped wooden back cover and a steel front cover that make it looks like a small round shield. Thick leather bands hold it together. A *book of warding* contains every sorcerer/wizard spell of the abjuration school, as well as all divination (scrying) spells from the same spell list.

When a wizard prepares spells from this book, it creates a shimmering, translucent disk of force in front of him. This translucent disk provides a shield bonus to the wizard's Armor Class in the same manner as the *shield* spell and immunity to *magic missiles*. The translucent disk is a force effect. Preparing at least five levels worth of spells from the *book of warding* grants a wizard the listed shield bonus. Preparing more spell levels from the book eventually grants the wizard the evasion ability as a 2nd-level rogue and the ability to cast *displacement* as a spell-like ability as previously described.

Strong abjuration; CL 19th; Weight 4 lb.

BOOK OF ELEMENTAL ATTUNEMENT

Total Spell Levels	Special Ability
5-13	Swim speed[1]
14-24	*Pyrotechnics* (3)
25–38	*Fly* (3)
39-59	*Wind wall* (3)
60-81	*Stone shape* (3)
82-112	*Fire shield* (3)
113-141	*Wall of stone* (3)
142+	*Control water* (3)

[1] Equal to the wizard's base land speed.

BOOK OF THE ROBUST

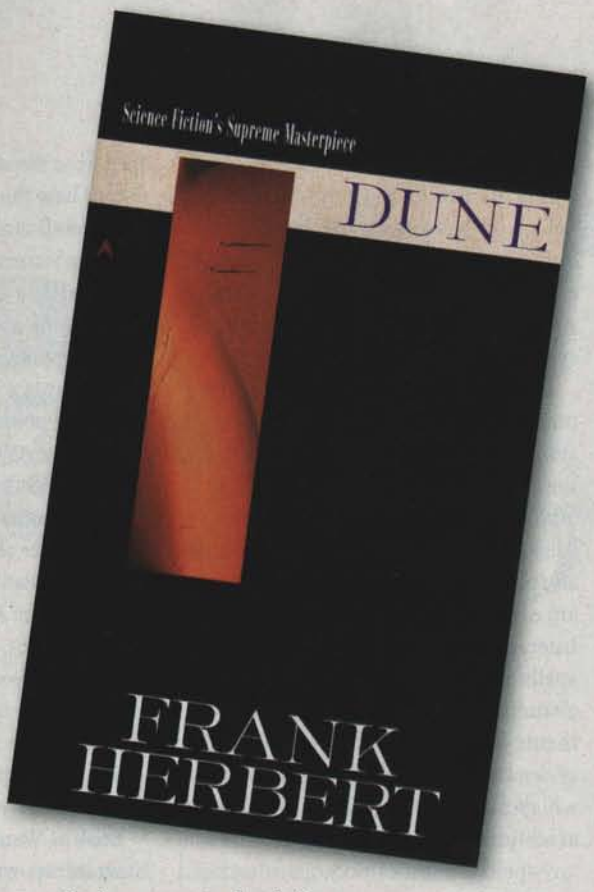
Total Spell Levels	Temporary Hit Points	Fortitude Resistance Bonus	Special Ability
14-24	5	—	—
25–38	10	+1	—
39-59	15	+2	*Cure light wounds* (1)
60-81	20	+3	*Cure moderate wounds* (1)
82-112	25	+4	*Cure serious wounds* (1)
113+	30	+5	*Cure critical wounds* (1)

BOOK OF WARDING

Total Spell Levels	Shield Bonus	Special Ability
5-13	+4	immune to *magic missiles*
14-24	+5	—
25–38	+6	—
39-59	+7	—
60-81	+8	—
82-112	+9	evasion
113+	+10	*displacement* (3)

by Mike McArtor
cover art by John Schoenherr

DUNE



Sometimes called the *Lord of the Rings* of science fiction, Frank Herbert's magnum opus, *Dune*, offers a number of unique and excellent ideas for even the most adamantly anti-scifi D&D player. The universe presented shows a depth of detail rarely seen in contemporary fiction. Everything and everyone has a history, giving the reality in which the novel's events occur the same weight of minutiae experienced when exploring a world as detailed as the FORGOTTEN REALMS.

Dune traces the path of young Paul Atreides from fifteen-year-old ducal heir on the water-rich planet of Caladan to his rise as a young man who becomes messiah-emperor on the desert planet Arrakis—Dune itself. Along the way, the novel packs in political intrigue, betrayal, murder, and a little philosophy. Alongside his mother, the Lady Jessica, Paul escapes into the death-dealing desert wilderness, where they come under the protection of Stilgar of the Fremen. Under the tutelage of both Jessica and Stilgar, Paul embraces and reworks the Fremen way even as Fremen culture embraces and reworks him.

Like any great adventure fiction, *Dune* also packs in lots of cool and imaginative concepts. Many of these ideas easily translate to D&D, from stillsuits to defensive shields. Of course, the most evocative aspect of *Dune* is the spice called Melange and its cycle of creation and use. The following presents a way for you to use a similiar cycle in your D&D game.

ORANGESPICE

Orangespice appears as a fine orange powder that smells heavily of cinnamon. At low doses, orangespice becomes mildly addictive; at high doses, it becomes fatally so. Consumed over a lifetime, orangespice adds years to your life and grants you insight into the future.

Orangespice acts much like a disease and in some ways like a drug from the *Book of Vile Darkness*. Some creatures actively seek exposure to orangespice for its beneficial qualities, oblivious to the dangers. Others, especially those who live near areas high in orangespice, cannot help but become exposed to it, for good or ill. As long as you ingest a steady amount of orangespice in your diet, you suffer no ill effects. The following table outlines the effects of orangespice.

Frequency: This lists how often you must either consume a dose of orangespice or else make a Fortitude save. You set this frequency by the length of time between your previous two doses of orangespice, although you can never move higher on the chart (you cannot wean yourself off orangespice over time). Once you've established a frequency of use, you can only maintain that frequency, increase the frequency of use, or quit orangespice altogether. If your frequency of consumption falls between two of the levels on the chart, use the more frequent level. For example, if you consume two doses of orangespice 6 months apart, your frequency becomes 1 month, and you must thereafter either consume a dose of orangespice or make a Fortitude save every month.

Spell-Like Ability (CL): This indicates which spell-like ability you gain from the spice you consume, as well as the caster level of that ability. The spell-like abilities are cumulative, so you gain all of the spell-like abilities higher on the list. You may use a particular spell-like ability once per dose you consume, and you may not use any spell-like abilities if you don't consume spice (whether or not you make your Fortitude save).

Fort DC: This is the DC of the Fortitude save you must make if you miss consuming a dose at the appropriate frequency interval.

Number of Saves: This is how many Fortitude saves you must make in a row in order to break your reliance on orangespice. If you later take a dose of orangespice after making the appropriate number of saves in a row, your frequency reverts to its previous level and you must succeed at this number of consecutive Fortitude saves to quit again.

Damage: The amount of damage you take if you fail a Fortitude save. Certain spells (such as *restoration*) can cure this damage normally, but no spell short of *wish* or *miracle* can prevent it from occurring.

Lifespan Increase: Orangespice grants a longer life if you're exposed to it for your entire life. Your DM adds the indicated number of years onto your maximum age when he makes your maximum age roll.

ORANGESPICE EFFECTS

Frequency	Spell-Like Ability (CL)	Fort DC	Number of Saves	Damage	Lifespan Increase
Year	—	8	2	1d2 Wis	—
Month	*Guidance* (1st)	16	3	1d2 Wis + 1d4 Str	10d2 years
Week	*Augury* (3rd)	24	4	1d2 Wis* + 1d4 Str + 1d6 Con	10d6 years
Day	*Divination* (7th)	32	5	2d2 Wis* + 2d4 Str* + 2d6 Con	10d10 years

*Permanent drain, not temporary damage.

A dose of orangespice costs 500 gp and has no appreciable weight.

ORANGESEER

Large Monstrous Humanoid
Hit Dice: 8d8+16 (52 hp)
Initiative: +11
Speed: 20 ft (4 squares), fly 10 ft. (clumsy)
Armor Class: 20 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +4 natural, +8 dodge), touch 16, flat-footed 20
Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+12
Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d6)
Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d6)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Psionics
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/magic, future sight, immunities, orangespice dependence, spell resistance 19, tongues, uncanny dodge
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +8
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 26, Wis 15, Cha 14
Skills: Concentration +13, Diplomacy +15, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (geography) +19, Knowledge (psionics) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +21
Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Spell Penetration
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary, band (1 orangeseer plus 4–6 1st-level warrior attendants), or guild (2–6 orangeseers plus 3–7 3rd-level warrior sergeants and 12–36 1st-level warrior attendants)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always lawful evil
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: —

This bloated creature appears somewhat humanoid, but its arms and legs seem vestigial compared to the immense bulk of its orange-skinned body. The strong scent of cinnamon assaults your nostrils.

Their minds open to the possibilities of the future and the vast existences of the present, orangeseers make dangerous assassins and spies. Only the wealthiest organizations can hope to maintain even one orangeseer for long periods of time. An orangeseer was once a humanoid who has since surrendered himself to orangespice's effects, making him wholly dependant on orangespice but giving him vast powers beyond those of even daily dosage users.

An orangeseer looks like an impossibly bloated human whose atrophied legs can no longer support it but yet somehow do. An orangeseer weighs about 1,000 pounds.

COMBAT

In combat, an orangeseer tries to stay out of melee, using his psionics to blast his foes. If the fight begins to go against him, the orangeseer grabs what orangespice it can and uses *dimension door* or *plane shift* to escape.

Psionics (Sp): At will—*augury, divination, guidance;* 3/day—*commune, dimension door, touch of idiocy;* 1/day—*charm person (DC 13), daze monster (DC 14), greater scrying (DC 19), hold person (DC 15), plane shift (DC 19), suggestion (DC 15).* Caster level 13th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Future Sight (Su): An orangeseer constantly sees several possible futures simultaneous with its view of the present. This ability grants the orangeseer a dodge bonus to Armor Class and an insight bonus on Initiative rolls equal to its Intelligence modifier (usually +8).

Immunities: Orangeseers are immune to mind-affecting effects, disease, and poison.

Orangespice Dependence (Ex): An orangeseer must use orangespice hourly. Because of its extreme reliance on orangespice, it automatically fails all Fortitude saves related to orangespice.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): An orangeseer retains its Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) and any dodge bonuses to AC even if caught flat-footed or attacked by an invisible creature.

SANDWORMS

You can easily introduce sandworms into your campaign by changing a few of the abilities of a purple worm. Sandworms create orangespice as a natural part of their life cycle, making their preservation imperative to those who harvest or use orangespice.

Creating a sandworm from a purple worm takes a few easy steps that mostly don't affect combat. First, take away the purple worm's poisonous sting attack. Give the worm the following orangespice creation special quality, and increase its tremorsense range to 1 mile. Change its environment to warm desert. A sandworm can run even when burrowing, but it can only burrow through sand and other loose material. Reduce its CR by 1. Finally, change the worm's advancement line to 16-32 HD (Gargantuan); 33+ (Colossal).

Don't fear making your sandworm bigger. The statistics given on page 211 of the *Monster Manual* represent the average purple worm but only an immature sandworm. Sandworms average about 300 feet long, 20 feet in diameter, and about 80 tons. Some deep desert dwellers claim to have spotted sandworms of around 1,000 feet long, and their legends tell of sandworms approaching a third of a mile in length.

Orangespice Creation (Ex): A sandworm produces 1 pound per HD of orangespice once per week. It leaves orangespice in its wake wherever it travels. Patches of orangespice occasionally work their way to the surface where they are easily harvested.

ZOGONIA
By tony
MAN! I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW INCREDIBLY DEVOID OF TREASURE THIS DUNGEON IS!
YEH!
SEVEN DUNGEON LEVELS AND DOZENS OF MONSTERS AND ALL WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT IS THIS BAG OF ASSORTED JUNK!
SORRY, GUYS. EVIDENTLY I GUIDED THE PARTY TO A PREVIOUSLY-LOOTED DUNGEON....
GROWR
STOMP
HMM
HUH?
GUURF! Heh heh!
SHH! AN ORC! IN THE NEXT ROOM! AND HE IS HOLDING SOMETHING!
HOLDING WHAT? A TREASURE CHEST?
NO! HE IS HOLDING A....PIE !!
SNORT
THAT'S THE BEST TREASURE YET! LET'S KILL HIM AND TAKE IT!
OOO, YES! KILL HIM AND TAKE IT !!!
AGREED! HERE IS THE PLAN... KEV, YOU SNEAK INTO THE ROOM. DINDIL, YOU WAIT HERE, LISTENING FOR MY SIGNAL. MEANWHILE, I—
MMMM
AAAG !! THE ORC IS EATING THE TREASURE !!! ATTACK!!
??!
fling!
KEV! I HOPE YOU REALIZE... THAT PIE NOW COUNTS AS ONE OF YOUR 'PICKS' OF THE TREASURE!
GAG...
RAT PIE.
end
TONY MOSELEY © 2004 WWW.ZOGONIA.COM

It Ends Here.

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

"Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months." --Oscar Wilde

THANKS FOR COMING ALONG TO MAGICON DCLXVI WITH ME, EVERYONE.
NO PROBLEM. SOME OF THESE SORCERESSES HAVE "NO SAVING THROW" WRITTEN ALL OVER THEM!
ARE YOU SURE IT WOULD BE RUDE TO DE-NAUGHTIFY THE NECROMANCY SEMINARS? THE DEMONSTRATION MATERIALS LOOK LIKE THEY'RE REALLY UNCOMFORTABLE.
WHY ARE WE HERE, AGAIN?
TO LOOK INTO THE LATEST IN SPECIALTY MAGIC. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A GENERAL PRACTITIONER, MYSELF, BUT IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT.
THIS LOOKS LIKE A FASHION-SHOW FOR MAGIC TYPES.
NOW THAT'S HARDLY FAIR. IT'S A--
WELCOME TO MAGICON DCLXVI'S "FOCUS ON HOCUS POCUS!" LET'S MEET OUR FIRST MODEL!
SUTEKHNOPHAGE IS ALWAYS READY FOR ARID CLIMATES WITH HER STAFF OF SANDBLASTING AND SCARAB STORM SPELL. SHE'S GUARANTEED TO KICK AN ENEMY'S ASP!
NOW, TOMACHINTOSCH IS A ROCK-SOLID MAGICIAN, COMPLETE WITH SEVERAL VOLCANIC ERUPTION INCANTATIONS AND AN ARMY OF SUMMONED STONE GOLEMS! LAVALICIOUS!
YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO POWERFUL OR TOO THIN IF YOU GO FOR THIS STUNNING NEC-ROMANTIC LOOK! A POSITIVE OUTLOOK AND NEGATIVE ENERGY WILL SWEEP YOUR FOES OFF THEIR FEET, AS THEY RISE TO JOIN YOUR UNDEAD ARMY!
GOTH ALMIGHTY!
THE ALL-NATURAL LOOK IS ALWAYS A WINNER, AND WHEN YOU TURN NATURE ITSELF AGAINST YOUR FOES, YOU'LL NEVER WANT SYNTHETICS AGAIN! STORMS, LIGHTNING, EVEN A TORNADO OR TWO ARE ALWAYS IN STYLE!
AND WHO DOESN'T WANT TO BE ENIGMATIC NOWADAYS? THIS MIST-AND-GLOWING-EYES ENSEMBLE LETS YOU STAY STEALTHY WHEN STALKING YOUR OPPONENTS! AND MIST IS SO SLIMMING!
I DON'T THINK YOU NEED ANY OF THIS STUFF, ARTAX.
REALLY?
YEAH, YOU BLOW STUFF UP JUST FINE. YOU JUST DON'T HAVE ANY FASHION SENSE.
OOOH! WE COULD PERM YOUR MOUSTACHE! MAYBE THAT WOULD--
LET'S SLEEP ON THAT ONE.

Hot and Heavy!

Our new Fire Opal line are some of the hottest dice you've ever seen. A translucent acrylic with just a touch of color and a vibrant splash of iridescence. The ones pictured below are Black Fire Opal and the translucence has a smokey quality that give them a magical quality.

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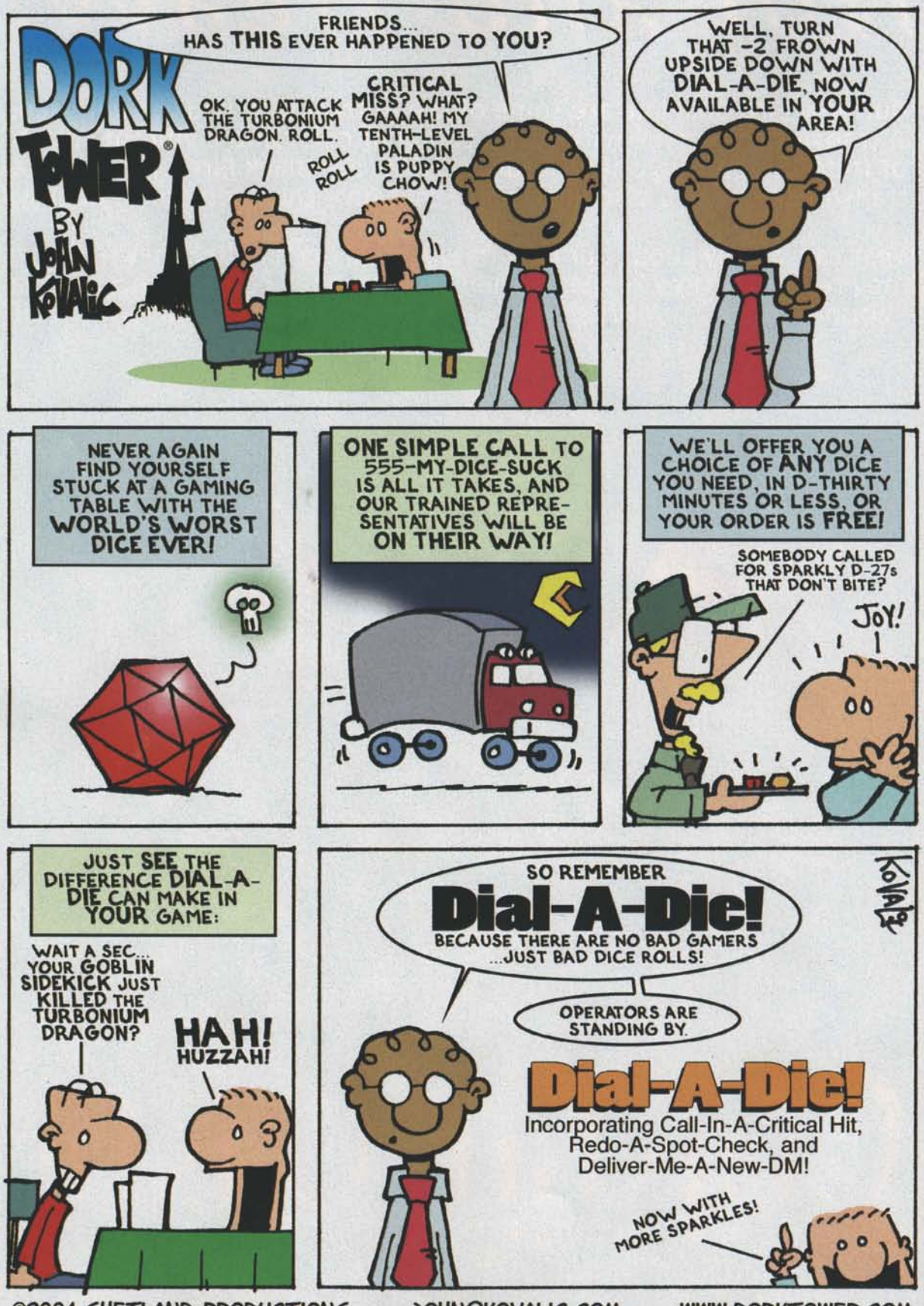
DORK TOWER®
BY JOHN KOVALIC
FRIENDS... HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?
OK. YOU ATTACK THE TURBONIUM DRAGON. ROLL.
ROLL ROLL
CRITICAL MISS? WHAT? GAAAAH! MY TENTH-LEVEL PALADIN IS PUPPY CHOW!
WELL, TURN THAT -2 FROWN UPSIDE DOWN WITH DIAL-A-DIE, NOW AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA!
NEVER AGAIN FIND YOURSELF STUCK AT A GAMING TABLE WITH THE WORLD'S WORST DICE EVER!
ONE SIMPLE CALL TO 555-MY-DICE-SUCK IS ALL IT TAKES, AND OUR TRAINED REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE ON THEIR WAY!
WE'LL OFFER YOU A CHOICE OF ANY DICE YOU NEED, IN D-THIRTY MINUTES OR LESS, OR YOUR ORDER IS FREE!
SOMEBODY CALLED FOR SPARKLY D-27s THAT DON'T BITE?
JOY!
JUST SEE THE DIFFERENCE DIAL-A-DIE CAN MAKE IN YOUR GAME:
WAIT A SEC... YOUR GOBLIN SIDEKICK JUST KILLED THE TURBONIUM DRAGON?
HAH! HUZZAH!
SO REMEMBER
Dial-A-Die!
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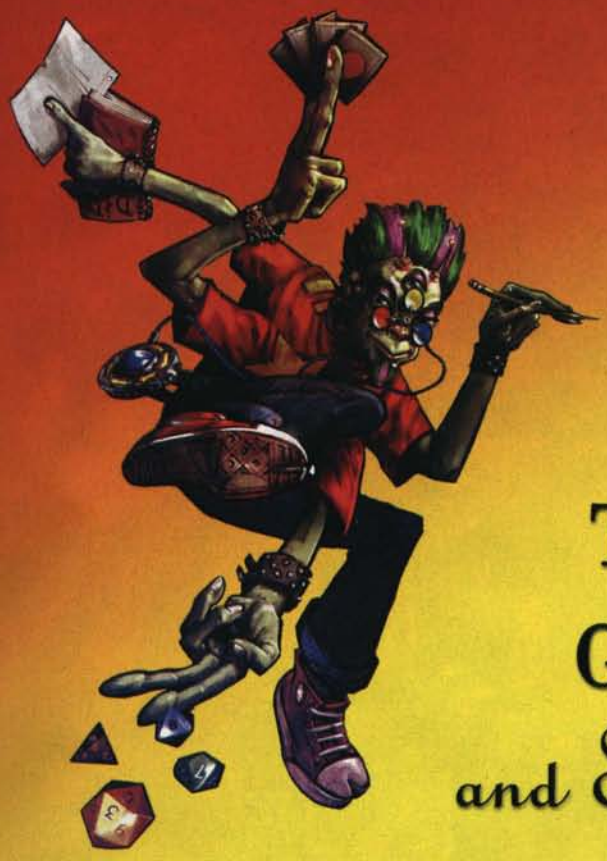

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LUKAS

by Ben Vandgrift • illustrated by Chuck Lukacs

HOMETOWN HEROES

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR CHARACTER'S NEIGHBORHOOD?

Once you slay the dragons, defeat the goblin hordes, and rescue the royalty, where do you retire? When you step on the toes of the law, run up a debt you can't repay, or steal the baron's jewels, where do you go to ground? Whether times are tough or the living is easy, a hero always returns home.

Where or what does your character call home? It's not a trivial question. Knowing his roots provides unparalleled depth to your character's outlook and personality. Few players worry about detailing their character's hometown, but whether a small village in the country or a downtrodden section of a sprawling city, examining these neglected locales adds depth to any character.

Many times characters sound like action movie heroes: wanderers without a family. They lay miles of road behind them seeking adventure and revenge. This might work for a pick-up game, but in an extended campaign, the characters need to lean upon the familiar for support. They need to spend some time with their feet up or their heads down.

As an asset, a hometown helps characters throughout their lives; it provides them with family to trust and friends whose aid they might enlist. As a roleplaying tool, few more powerful scenes exist than those involving a character's family and friends. For all these reasons and more, players should seriously consider their characters' hometowns.

GROWING UP

By understanding the environment where your character grew up, you gain insight into your characters' outlook and experiences. Who were your character's allies and enemies? What foes provoke his most potent responses? Where does he feel most at home? Any of these questions might detail interesting or integral aspects of your character's youth. Even those he now adventures with might reflect companions he held dear in his adolescence.

Education: The most integral and defining experiences in your character's life probably stemmed from his education. Whether he helped his parents on the farm or learned at a university, education accounts for almost all of your character's traits.

Many characters in fantasy settings learn a trade through apprenticeship. Trade guilds in cities provide training for a fee or indentured service, and they might provide access to everything your character needs. Prominent artisans might take on students to pass on their skills in smaller communities.

Less mundane organizations also exist to train your character. Wizards draw upon a wide variety of knowledge, not to mention spells, and might educate the studious. For the pious youth, a temple could provide the education they seek. Studies might include religion, health, and healing, along with other options

depending on the particulars of the faith. If an army or militia protects your character's home, he—or perhaps a member of his family—might serve in it or know some fighting techniques from his service. Militias and military companies might train members in particular feats or skills.

Many children also admire heroic personalities. Their heroes could include an adventuresome wanderer coming home with tales from afar, a storied soldier long retired, or just a good samaritan. Many youths model themselves after extraordinary and revered members of their community. Your character might have learned from a local legend or from her stories, and could have decided on a course of study based on the hero's life.

Besides these possibilities, people always pass through a neighborhood, no matter how close-knit. Traveling entertainers, seasonal workers, and passing adventurers could have taught your character almost anything imaginable and inspired him to take up a life on the road.

Family: Few people have no family. Biological parents, adoptive parents, or some other caregivers served your character as his family. Even if a generous itinerant priest raised your character, that situation served the purpose of a family model, with acolytes taking the place of siblings and older clerics manning the posts of aunts and uncles.

Your character made his first friends and enemies among his family. He shares his oldest quarrels and triumphs with his brothers, sisters, and cousins. These people don't go away: No matter how far your character travels or what he gets into, he can always come home and pick up the camaraderie or bickering right where he left off.

Many families also carry on a specific trade or tradition that your character might maintain an interest in. Following in the family footsteps is a common career path, especially under the pressure of a long tradition or in light of a particularly fascinating vocation. Detailing your character's family business might suggest what skills he knows and professional contacts he might retain from his training.

Friends and Foes: Your character's youth was dappled with friends. Some stuck, some moved on. Those friends make good allies and resources for an adventuring PC.

Alternatively, friends from adolescence who betrayed your character make vicious foes. Some grudges never go away, and those that began in childhood might grow into deadly contests.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO BUILD A CHARACTER

You usually conceive a character concept in a bubble of numbers and rules. When you create a character, you start with an idea about the class you're going to choose and maybe an impression of the character's personality and history. However, before these numbers get crunched, you should take a moment to think about your character's origins.

Ability Scores: Growing up, who were your character's heroes? Was it the beefy ex-soldier or the willowy druid? Did he appreciate the quick wits of the tavern layabout or the esoteric knowledge of a nearby sage? What attributes in a person did the community value? Did it appreciate the strong, the fast, or the wise? In most cases, your character posseses high ability scores in traits he values, so you should consider how his life and goals led him to focus on such abilities.

Alignment: A community with a particular moral (or immoral) tendency might convey that inclination to your character. Whether the town was self-serving or benevolent, or had a structured council or a loose agreement between artisans, a child raised in a consistent environment takes on the characteristics of that environment. Determine the town's tendencies and consider how they apply to your character.

Equipment: Your character's equipment might betray his hometown as surely as a nametag on his armor. If your character begins his career with things from nearby shops you should take care in choosing weapons and armor typical to his home area. Consider what available tools might serve as weapons, such as axes, hammers, picks, and bows. For example, if he comes from a costal village, your character might wield a trident and net like the fishermen there, while he might favor a sickle if he comes from an agrarian community.

Feats: The *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* presents the concept of

regional feats: feats that occur regularly or uniquely in the populace of a region. Look to those examples, consider your character's home region, and consider feats appropriate to people from that area. Once you choose feats especially useful to the people of an area, consider what feats your character might posess.

Skills: Which skills do your character's family and friends most appreciate? Which profession or apprenticeship earns him respect and which invites scorn? Before putting ranks on paper, consider the person he learned these skills from. Someone in his life most likely inspired him to be who he is, and mentors probably taught him the skills he brings into play.

BE YOUR OWN ADVENTURER

Laying out a town's preferences reveals the interaction between your character's skills and attributes versus those valued by the town. Your character's choices are influenced by both how he develops and whether or not his values resonate with those of his neighborhood.

Maybe your character's personality and that of the town align. This casts him as a representative of his hometown if not quite a typical citizen. As such, most residents acknowledge and recognize him as a hero of the neighborhood and aid him if possible.

To add conflict, think of ways that your character diverges from the ordinary view. Develop a few conflicting cultural themes. Even though this might close a door or two when asking for aid, it adds another emotional hook to the location.

To turn it completely around, try building a neighborhood that ostracized your character because he rebelled against the common values. Home might then be a place your character actively avoids. This makes understanding the virtues of the town no less important, as a divergent character expects no hospitality from those with whom his ideals differ or blatantly oppose.

Building A Village: By this point, many of the general questions about your character's home village should be answered. Don't stop here; continue to flesh out the town, village, or neighborhood until it becomes a living, breathing community. Make note of your character's ties and prepare to use them throughout his adventuring career.

Give special attention to your character's immediate family. You should detail names, appearances, and outlooks of parents, siblings, and other notable relatives. Define their relationships with your character and the likelihood of them helping him should he need it.

While having a hometown encourages you to develop your character's history and outlook, working with your group to develop a collective hometown might also make for a unique and memorable game (see the article "Collaborative Campaign Building" in *Dragon* #322). Not only does this help create a cohesive adventuring party, but you make one that shares the same stories, values, and acquaintances.

Bringing the World to Life: Building your character's hometown both gives the DM a rest and gives you a hand in developing the campaign world. You might want to develop a stomping ground complete with people and places of importance to your character. By giving the DM something to work with—an old enemy, an old flame, or a local legend—you help guide the flow and themes of adventures, and provide inspiration for a side story or solo adventure. While creating details, leave holes for the Dungeon Master to fill with connecting stories and surprises.

Once you create and populate your character's hometown, never bring trouble home. If you want to maintain your neighborhood as a safe haven from evil, never let it follow you there. Your character is responsible for keeping the people helping him as far out of harm's way as possible.

Using Existing Material: Many worlds offer existing material to draw upon for your character's hometown. Towns often list details about interesting personalities who live there and the public officials who run them. However, most give only the most cursory treatment to the ins and outs of daily life, like street names and local merchants.

This allows you and the DM to customize the material to meet your campaign's needs. Be careful when using a previously published location as your character's hometown. You might use some of the listed personalities, but many more still need creating. By working

with the DM, you can make a living, vibrant home for your character.

Working Backwards: You might have played your character for several years, yet he's never had a hometown. Not a problem. Look at your character and consider the places where he might have grown up. Find themes within his outlook and behavior that result from enculturation or upbringing, and once established, build a detailed home out of the common themes.

NOW WHAT?

Once constructed, your character's hometown should provide a good idea of where he comes from, the people he grew up with, and his mentors and influences. So now what? There's more to having a well-detailed community than background alone. Your character's hometown goes with him as the story develops. An old neighborhood brims with stories waiting to happen, and it provides resources that your character should take advantage of throughout his career.

Trust: When things get hot and your character needs to go to ground, what better place than home? Your character's family should always let him hide out, even if reluctantly. If he remains in contact, there's a warm fire, if not open arms, to greet him. Moreover, your character's family should protect him from his enemies to the best of its ability.

When times get hard, your family might provide countless benefits. No matter how far down your character falls, he can probably find a hot meal and a warm bed among his kin. Family members always take care of him while he heals, and they do their best to get your character what he needs to get back on his feet and out of their homes.

Brushing Up: When your character needs to improve his skills, the best person to learn from is often his previous instructor. For instance, as a wizard increases in skill, his old tutor might teach him new tricks, while the militia commander could help a martial character improve his technique. Returning home for training also helps a character keep in touch while learning and improving skills.

Off-Hours: An adventurer does a lot more than adventuring, and a steady stream of inns, taverns, and lodgings abroad weighs on the shoulders. If your character plans on establishing a house, keep, shrine, or sacred grove, his home community might provide the best place for it. Your character knows the area and the people, and might get labor and materials cheaper than elsewhere. Also, a friendly hometown will stand up to protect itself and your character, instead of protecting itself from your character. Your character might also bury treasure, hide hunted allies, or stash vital information on his turf with relative assurance of its safety.

Even if just to rest on the family farm for a while, downtime at home provides an opportunity for the DM to make your character aware of local goings-on. Some things might fall outside the scope of the current adventure or foreshadow the next.

Keeping in Touch: The more distant the relationship becomes with your character's folks back home, the less likely they welcome him with open arms and no questions. Your character might want to send a courier from time to time or pass word along with a caravan teamster heading that way—anything to let the folks back home know that he is okay.

If your character doesn't, he should expect some flak when he returns to town. Whether serious or not, the interaction with those who thought your character lost, dead, or just lazy always makes for good roleplaying.

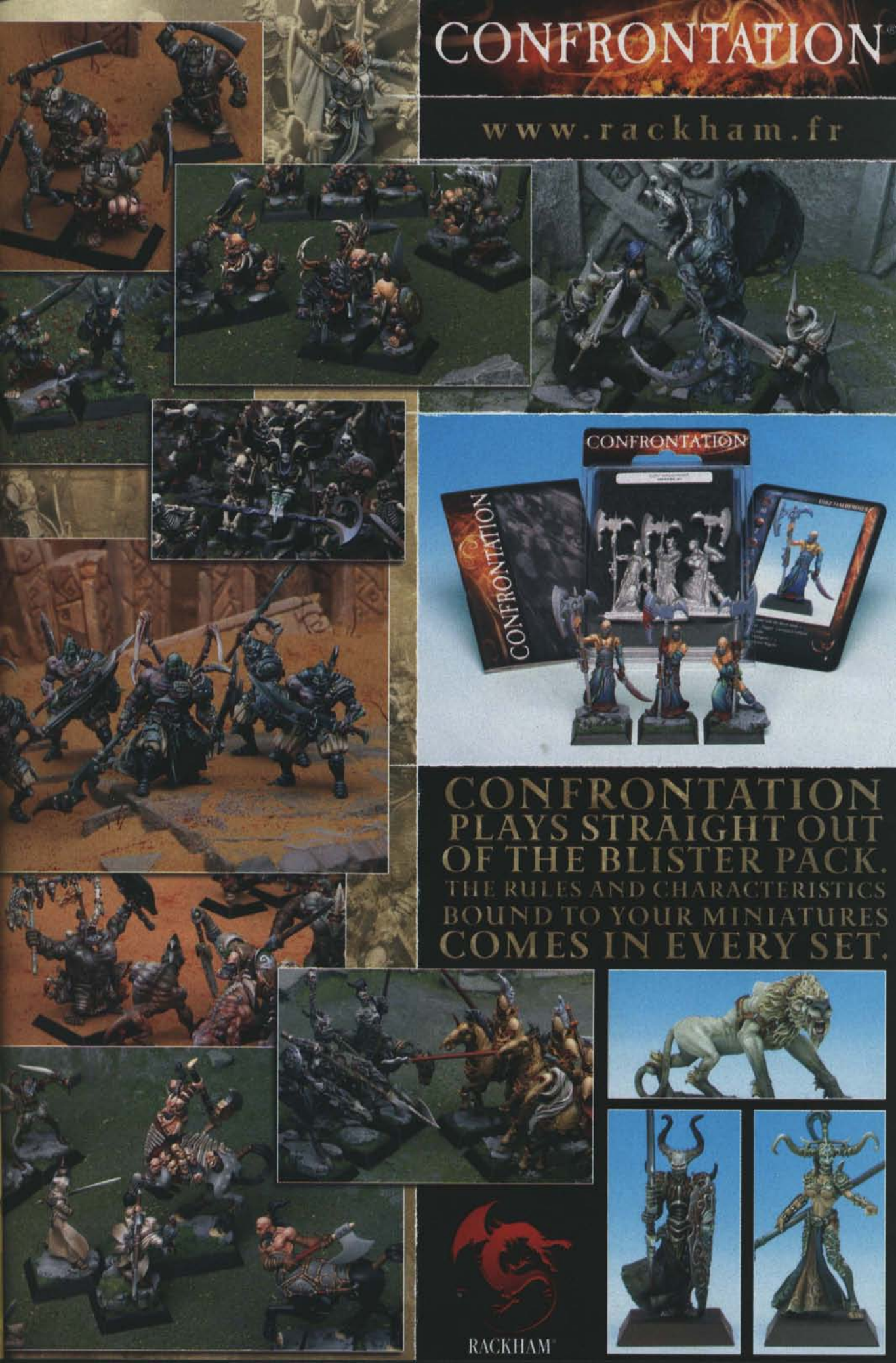
Old Scores: Failing all else, your character's past might be a good place to dredge up an enemy. If amenable, the DM might work in a short story in which your character confronts an old enemy—or old friend—who's causing problems outside the town. Even if it's nothing grandiose, your character should bear in mind these old debts when he returns home.

Exceptions: These suggestions only begin to cover the possibilities of family and home, but they should provide food for thought on the matter. The key is to set up your character with a support structure, and to define his origin and his relationship to it, with the idea that his family and early life connections might provide help when needed, as well as interesting story elements.

As an example, suppose your character grew up with a traveling band of entertainers. That band serves as his family and community all in one, and he learned most of his skills from them. Assuming the caravan took a consistent route annually, he would likely develop relationships with the townsfolk he saw year after year, as well as the merchants, artisans, teamsters, and cartwrights from whom the group purchased goods and services.

Returning home, in this case, means returning to the caravan. The community ethic is just as strong, if not stronger—only without a fixed location—and with all of the benefits of a normal hometown.

Understanding where your character comes from adds to his playability. Likewise, developing a named town into a living breathing community gives your character a number of options for aid, and perhaps a sense of belonging. Thus, just by taking a few moments to consider your character's roots, you add countless levels of depth and flexibility to you and your group's roleplaying experience.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Arcane Ancestry 2

More Bloodline Feats for Sorcerers

Born into their power, sorcerers gain the ability to channel magical energies not from devotion, discipline, or merit, but from blood alone. While many born with an arcane gift claim draconic blood, the great wyrms are not the only source of arcane might. Other magical creatures can similarly interbreed with humanoid races, and some beings manipulate the nature of other races for their own inscrutable purposes.

Some sorcerous families might know and flaunt their heritage, but for others, the source of their powers remains a mystery. The children of such lineages sometimes discover the truth, either by accident, quest, or revelation. Once a sorcerer discovers her bloodline, she can better cultivate her connection with her arcane ancestry. As she becomes more synchronized with her own soul, additional spells consistent with her ancestry become available to her. If she chooses to continue developing her bloodline, she can also gain additional abilities based on her heritage.

Bloodline Feats

The feats presented in this article belong to a category called bloodline feats. Bloodline feats were originally introduced in "Arcane Ancestry" in *Dragon* #311 and should not be confused with the concept of bloodlines from *Unearthed Arcana*. See the Bloodlines Vs. Bloodlines sidebar for a description of the *Unearthed Arcana* rules and suggestions for how to use them with those presented in this article.

Bloodline feats are designed with sorcerers in mind, although any character who meets the prerequisites can take them. Each base feat in this category (the ones with the word "bloodline" in their names) grants a character the bloodline of a particular kind of creature, plus a specific set of extra arcane spells known. If more than one of her classes allows her to cast arcane spells without preparation the character must decide to which list of arcane spells known the spells granted by the feat are added. Choosing such a feat represents not only having a particular sort of ancestor, but also coming to terms with that heritage sufficiently to benefit from it. A character may choose only one base bloodline feat.

The description of each base bloodline feat offers guidelines on how that ancestry might affect the character's personality, appearance, and spell selection. The player is free to use or ignore any of these suggestions, as desired. While ancestry does influence who you are and what you do, it is not the only telling feature of your character—or even the primary one.

Each base bloodline feat is the foundation of a short feat tree—that is, another feat presented in this article requires it as a prerequisite. These additional feats represent a sorcerer's continuing mastery of her heritage. In addition, some bloodline feats are general enough that any character who takes a base bloodline feat (regardless of which one) can acquire them.

Bloodlines Vs Bloodlines

This article presents bloodline feats: feats spellcasters can take that relate their spellcasting to their ancestries. *Unearthed Arcana* presents bloodlines in a different fashion. In that book, having a particular ancestor grants a character special abilities at particular levels, depending on the strength of the bloodline. In exchange, the character must take one or more bloodline levels (such levels grant no benefit). *Unearthed Arcana* presents bloodlines for thirty-nine different creatures and provides guidance for creating your own.

You could use either idea for bloodlines in your game, but you might get the best result from using both. Consider having your sorcerer character take a bloodline feat and use the appropriate bloodline from *Unearthed Arcana*. Alternatively, your character might be more unique if he can trace ancestry to two different creatures, taking the bloodline feat for one and the bloodline from *Unearthed Arcana* for the other.

For more bloodline feats and guidelines for creating them, see DRAGON #311. That and other DRAGON back issues can be purchased at **paizo.com/backissues.**

The base bloodline feats are most advantageous when taken in conjunction with the character's first level of sorcerer (or another class that casts spells in the same manner), but they can also prove beneficial to characters of higher level, especially for the purpose of accessing the other bloodline-related feats.

You can use a bloodline feat to help define your character. For example, when dealing with a bloodline from an evil race, how your character reacts to those creatures helps define his personality. A character of good alignment might struggle with the evil of his ancestors, but he might also act graciously to a creature he perceives as family. Bloodlines can also encourage multiclassing. For example, the natural extension of the Plant Bloodline leads to druid. The bard's wandering life fits well with the Anarchic Bloodline. Sorcerers with the Axiomatic Bloodline feat might find the life of a paladin or monk appealing. You and your DM might also wish to discuss altering the cosmetic effects of your sorcerer's spells. While doing nothing to actually change the game mechanics, having a serpent-blooded sorcerer's *magic missiles* appear as writhing snakes or accompanying your Necromantic Bloodline sorcerer's evocations with the smell of old tombs can add color to your character.

Anarchic Bloodline [Bloodline]

You are descended from a chaotic outsider. The characteristics you display might depend in part on the kind of chaotic heritage you have. Regardless of your exact ancestry, you are likely to have one or more unusual physical traits, such as mismatched eyes or untamable and strangely hued hair.

The descendants of demons tend to have misshapen features and a terrible temper with a decidedly cruel streak. Eladrin descendants tend to have strong emotional reactions (especially positive emotions) and often become fervent (if short-term) supporters of a cause. Characters with slaad ancestry generally have strongly variable mood swings, and they often take on the personality traits, speech patterns, and clothing styles of those around them in a haphazard and unpredictable manner. Those with titan blood often stand head-and-shoulders above other members of their race; they enjoy experiencing the world around them and become angry when others might merely be bored.

Characters with the Anarchic Bloodline feat are nearly always chaotic-aligned. They tend to be restless, desiring change above all else. They are prone to act irrationally, based on sudden whims and flights of fancy. The adventurous life, full of excitement, danger, and travel, appeals to them. Chaos-blooded characters often have a wide variety of spells in their repertoire from all schools and for all manner of uses. They rarely focus their spells around a theme or with a specific function in mind.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Color spray*
2nd—*Tasha's hideous laughter*
3rd—*Rage*
4th—*Confusion*
5th—*Mind fog*
6th—*Mislead*
7th—*Prismatic spray*
8th—*Maze*
9th—*Weird*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells with the lawful descriptor, and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Axiomatic Bloodline [Bloodline]

You are descended from a native of a lawful plane. The most common members of this bloodline are the spawn of devils, who sow their seed in the Material Plane as part of far-reaching and complex plots against their rivals. Archons create mixed-blood offspring with mortals in order to counter the machinations of devils and other evil outsiders. Rarely, mortal travelers who spend a significant portion of their lives in a lawfully aligned plane begin to take on some of the traits of that plane that later manifest in their descendants.

Members of this bloodline are almost exclusively lawful. They seem driven by an inner set of rules that generally work in accordance with the laws of the land. They tend to have a symmetrical appearance, dress conservatively, and stick to a regimented life. Even when adventuring, they follow their routine to the best of their ability. Creatures descended from devils tend to use rules for their benefit, manipulating the system and taking advantage of legal loopholes. Descendants of archons practice the gentler aspects of regimen, living lives in as organized a fashion as possible.

Characters with the Axiomatic Bloodline feat tend to be organized and consistent; they generally look down on abnormality or spontaneity. As such, those with lawful blood excel at spells that locate items and creatures as well as spells that return things to their proper place or shape.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Detect chaos*
2nd—*Locate object*
3rd—*Magic circle against chaos*
4th—*Locate creature*
5th—*Dismissal*
6th—*True seeing*
7th—*Forcecage*
8th—*Discern location*
9th—*Dominate monster*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells with the chaotic descriptor, and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Familiarity [Bloodline]

Your innate magical blood gives you a greater tie to your familiar.

Prerequisites: Any bloodline feat, ability to summon a familiar, ability to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Benefit: Your familiar gains abilities as if your class level in the arcane spellcasting class that granted you access to this feat were 2 levels higher.

Fickle Fate [Bloodline]

You may call upon your chaotic heritage to aid you.

Prerequisite: Anarchic Bloodline, ability to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Benefit: Once per day, you may improve a single d20 roll by adding the result of a 1d6 roll to it. You must declare the use of the ability before you attempt the d20 roll. This is a supernatural ability.

Grave Friend [Bloodline]

Your connection with the grave lets you move among undead somewhat more freely.

Prerequisites: Necromantic Bloodline, ability to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Benefits: You gain a +2 bonus on any saving throw to resist the extraordinary and supernatural abilities of creatures of the undead type.

Green Heart [Bloodline]

Your connection to plant life allows you to resist toxins deadly to most creatures.

Prerequisites: Plant Bloodline, ability to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws made to resist the effects of poisons and diseases.

Illithid Bloodline [Bloodline]

Illithids frequently perform experiments on their slaves, grafting and splicing bits from one species onto another. Often, illithids use body parts from their own race to augment their slaves. Eventually, some of these enhanced slaves escape back to their own people. You are the descendant of one such escaped slave.

Creatures with the Illithid Bloodline feat tend toward no particular alignment, personality trait, or overall outlook. They do, however, typically share certain physical traits, such as lacking hair but possessing black eyes and pale skin with a slightly purplish tint.

Sorcerers who have an escaped illithid slave in their ancestry tend to select spells that manipulate or ruin the mind. They favor enchantment spells above all others.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at first, from the following list.

1st—*Hypnotism*
2nd—*Detect thoughts*
3rd—*Suggestion*
4th—*Confusion*
5th—*Feeblemind*
6th—*Mass suggestion*
7th—*Insanity*
8th—*Mind blank*
9th—*Dominate monster*

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Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells that alter an object or creature's size or shape (such as *enlarge person* or the *polymorph* spells) and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Lawful Discipline [Bloodline]

Your orderly mind allows you to overcome magical coercion more easily.

Prerequisites: Axiomatic Bloodline, ability to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Will saves made to resist mind-affecting effects.

Mind Weapon [Bloodline]

The mental power of your ancestors has passed to you.

Prerequisites: Illithid Bloodline, ability to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Benefit: You can use *daze* three times per day as a spell-like ability (caster level equals your level in the arcane spellcasting class that granted you access to this feat). This ability does not affect your number of spells known or spells per day.

Necromantic Bloodline [Bloodline]

One of your ancestors was an undead creature or possessed an unholy link with the undead brought on by frequent contact. While undead do not reproduce by normal means, their infectious taint might affect necromancers and others who deal regularly with the dead or undead. In rare instances a vampire or other undead might feed off a pregnant humanoid and in allowing her to live endow the unborn child with its foul nature.

Your physical characteristics might vary depending on the type of undead creature from which you are descended, but you're likely to have pale or ashen skin and dark eyes and hair. The touch of undeath in a family almost exclusively comes from intelligent, corporeal undead. It takes powerful magic or extremely bizarre situations for creatures to gain this feat from unintelligent or incorporeal undead. The descendants of ghouls tend to be feral and constantly hungry. Those with ghast ancestors generally have a strong, unpleasant stench, and they often find it difficult to satiate their hunger. Lich-blooded characters value intelligence and generally have elitist personalities, often appearing gaunt and skeletal. Characters descended from mummies tend to have dull but focused personalities, and many have gaunt, dry skin. Descendants of vampires tend to have long canine teeth and commanding, seductive personalities. Wight-blooded characters tend to have clawlike fingernails and toenails, and lean, muscular bodies; they are generally hate-filled loners who hold grudges. Characters with the Necromantic Bloodline feat often favor wearing the blacks, whites, and grays of mourning.

Sorcerers with a touch of the undead in their family trees tend to concentrate, appropriately enough, on spells from the school of necromancy. Spells that allow the caster to control a creature's mind are popular among those descended from vampires.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Cause fear*
2nd—*Ghoul touch*
3rd—*Vampiric touch*
4th—*Contagion*
5th—*Dominate person*
6th—*Eyebite*
7th—*Control undead*
8th—*Trap the soul*
9th—*Wail of the banshee*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells of the conjuration (healing) subschool, and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Penumbra Bloodline [Bloodline]

You are descended from a planar traveler who frequented the Ethereal Plane or Plane of Shadow. The energies of these planes altered and augmented your ancestor, infusing your bloodline with a trace of shadow or ether. You are touched by the planes, and they grant you arcane powers that continue to shape your life.

Penumbra-blooded creatures tend toward extremes in coloration, with either unusually dark or fair skin, black or stark white hair, and silver or black irises. Most are very thin, but not to the point of unhealthiness. They generally wear plain clothing in subdued hues of gray or white. Creatures with shadowy or ethereal ancestry tend toward neutrality and often have quiet, secretive personalities. Many penumbra-blooded creatures prefer dark places and avoid direct sunlight as much as possible.

Sorcerers who possess a penumbral ancestor favor spells that conceal places and people as well as spells that access the Plane of Shadow or Ethereal Plane.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Obscuring mist*
2nd—*Darkness*
3rd—*Nondetection*
4th—*Evard's black tentacles*
5th—*Shadow evocation*
6th—*Shadow walk*
7th—*Plane shift*
8th—*Greater shadow evocation*
9th—*Etherealness*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells with the light descriptor, and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Plant Bloodline [Bloodline]

One of your ancestors had an unusually close tie to the natural world. Possibly the rarest of ancestries, only the most powerful spellcasters or deities can cause the melding of plants and animals.

Plant-blooded creatures tend to have brown skin and green eyes, and they generally act more patiently and quietly than their peers. Scions of flowering plants are often beautiful and vain, in love with bright colors and prone to extravagance. Those who descend from vines have long thin bodies with tangled masses of hair and combative dispositions. Fungal descendants tend toward pale skin and hair tones, preferring sedentary lives and dark, cool places. Tree-blooded creatures stand taller than their peers and have quiet but friendly personalities, content with deep thoughts and slow actions.

Sorcerers with plants in their ancestry prefer spells that manipulate themselves or the environment around them to protect or grow life.

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Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Endure elements*
2nd—*False life*
3rd—*Water breathing*
4th—*Minor creation*
5th—*Transmute rock to mud*
6th—*Control water*
7th—*Control weather*
8th—*Control plants*
9th—*Imprisonment*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

In almost every culture, plants and growing things represent life and growth. Thus, characters who possess this life-centered bloodline cannot learn or cast spells with the death descriptor, and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Serpent Bloodline [Bloodline]

One of your ancestors served as a slave of the yuan-ti. Over the course of years, the constant exposure to serpentine magic and blood warped your ancestor, putting just a trace of snake blood into your family line. Your physical characteristics might vary with the type of snake from which you are descended, but you're likely to have yellow or black eyes and patches of scaly skin.

Viper-blooded characters tend to have sharp, angular features with narrow jaws; they generally speak quickly and have a sharp wit. Descendants of cobras tend to have wide, thick necks and hair that grows out from the sides of their heads; they generally prefer solitude, but when in the company of others they possess a commanding presence. Creatures with a constrictor ancestor often have strong, thick bodies and limbs; they tend to take their time, even in dangerous situations, but they become an unstoppable force once they finally decide to act. Rattler-blooded characters tend to have a tough, worldly look; they like to dress in bright colors, especially reds and yellows, and are usually quite vocal about their abilities and intent.

Sorcerers with serpentine blood prefer spells that intimidate a foe or end a fight quickly.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation, ability to summon a familiar.

Benefit: Your ancestry gives you a bonus spell known at each spell level, starting at 1st, from the following list.

1st—*Cause fear*
2nd—*Hypnotic pattern*
3rd—*Sepia snake sigil*
4th—*Phantasmal killer*
5th—*Dominate person*
6th—*Repulsion*
7th—*Power word blind*
8th—*Power word stun*
9th—*Power word kill*

Special: If a character takes this feat any time after 1st level and has already learned any of the spells on this list in the class to which she applies this feat, she gains no additional spells known at those spell levels. This restriction does not apply if she learned any of these spells as a member of another spellcasting class.

Because serpents must forever crawl on their bellies, even their offspring cannot hope to look to the skies. Characters with this feat cannot learn or cast spells intended to allow them to leave the ground (such as *fly, levitate,* or *overland flight*), and all such spells are removed from the spell lists of all their spellcasting classes.

Venomless [Bloodline]

Your serpentine ancestry grants you the ability to remove the effects of venom.

Prerequisites: Serpent Bloodline, ability to cast 5th-level arcane spells.

Benefit: You can cast *neutralize poison* once per day as a spell-like ability (caster level equals your level in the arcane spellcasting class that granted you access to this feat). This ability does not affect your number of spells known or spells per day.

Voice of the Green [Bloodline]

The touch of plant life in your heritage allows you to relate with growing things.

Prerequisites: Plant Bloodline, ability to cast 5th-level arcane spells.

Benefit: You can cast *speak with plants* once per day as a spell-like ability (caster level equals your level in the arcane spellcasting class that granted you access to this feat). This ability does not affect your number of spells known or spells per day.

The Ultimate Gaming Toolbox

The Advanced Tactics Series is now fully established, having successfully expanded upon the best-selling Quintessential line. The latest release, ***the Quintessential Ranger II***, is written by Patrick Younts, (Quintessential Monk II, Quintessential Sorcerer) and featuring rules for Ranger characters throughout their careers, ***The Quintessential Ranger II*** is an invaluable resource from First to Twentieth level. With epic expansion rules, multiclassing, career paths and a multitude of alternatives for enhancing and improving your ranger's potential through legendary classes, survival tactics, new equipment options as well as prestige classes and feats designed for the experienced ranger, this is an essential resource for players and Games Masters alike.

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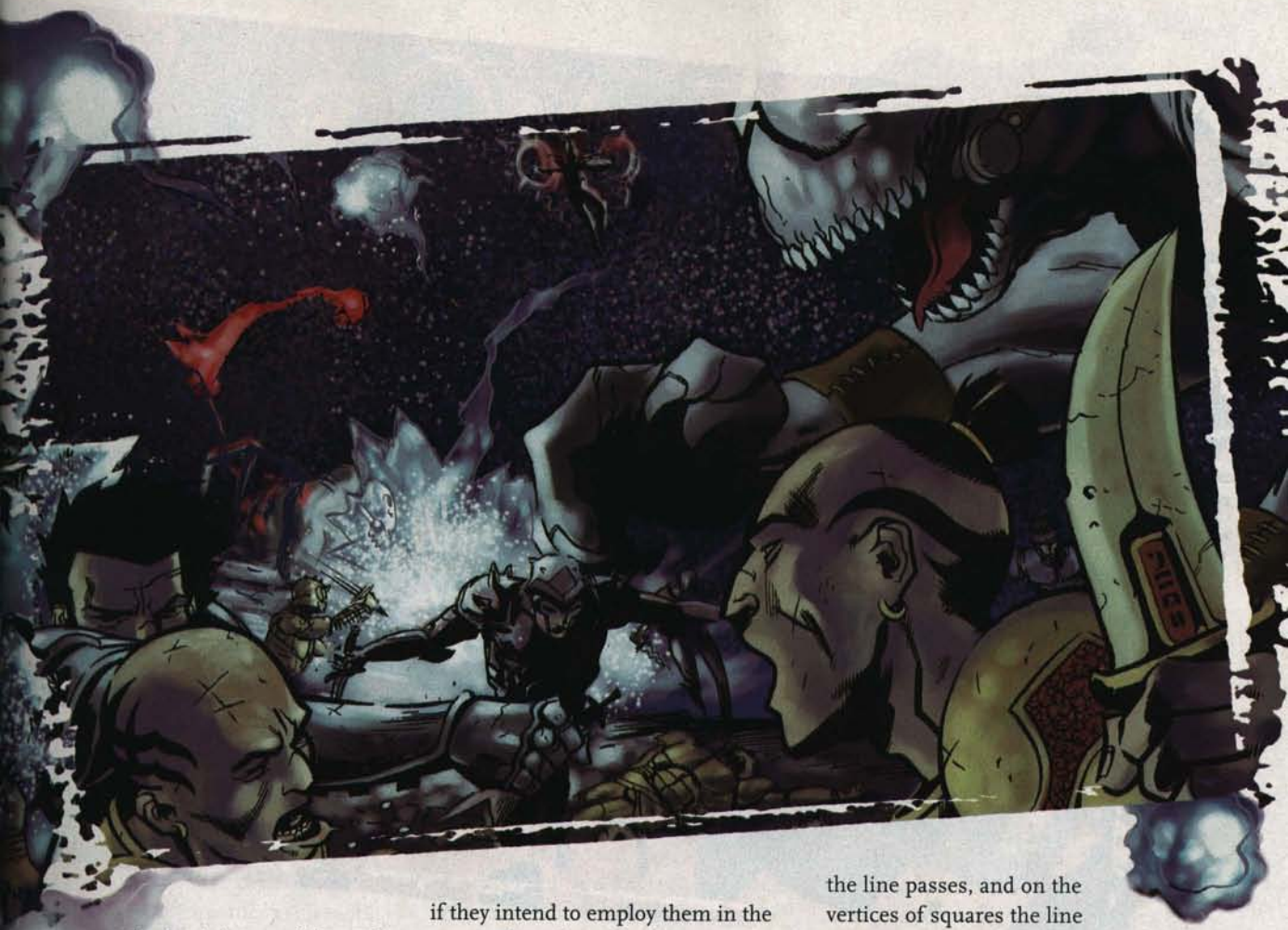

The classic image of the evoker as a wild-eyed wizard standing atop his tower and hurling *fireballs* and *lightning bolts* at his foes might stir the imaginations of apprentices, but it leaves many inexperienced spellcasters scorched by their own untamed magic. Only the dullest-witted foes clump together when facing a spellcaster. Most rarely allow themselves to get trapped in situations where a *fireball* could affect them without consequence to the caster or his allies. The possibility of spells threatening the caster and his allies more than opponents becomes even more likely in the narrow confines of dungeon environments. Thus, the clever spellcaster must learn early that it's not the size of the spell that matters—it's what you do with it.

The majority of damaging area spells harm multiple targets, but only two of the arcane ones (*chain lightning* and *meteor swarm*) give the caster much in the way of control over the area affected. Thus, it is vitally important for arcane and divine spellcasters alike to learn the best tactical applications of each spell's area, especially if they intend to employ them in the cramped confines of a dungeon.

Lines

The simplest area-affecting spells to use deal damage to creatures in a straight line. With even the barest consideration, a spellcaster using a spell like *lightning bolt* can easily avoid harming fellow adventurers. Yet, even line spells might go awry if the caster isn't careful. Spellcasters rarely stand at the forefront of battle, and in narrow hallways (the ideal place to use line spells), getting a line of effect free of allies might be difficult.

If the party spellcaster prepares numerous line spells, it's best to try to engage enemies at the entrances to hallways. This way, a caster can stand 10 feet back from the entrance with two fighters flanking the door. Thus, casting *lighting bolt* or a similar spell allows the caster to affect much of the hallway, while the fighters can use the threat of their attacks of opportunity to discourage enemies from charging.

Also, be aware that lines affect targets in any square through which the line passes, and on the vertices of squares the line is considered to touch all four squares. Thus, a *lightning bolt* aimed across the diagonal of battle-grid squares or along one of their lines affects forty-eight squares. Under optimal conditions, with a Medium or Small creature in every square affected, even the weakest *lightning bolt* potentially deals 240d6 points of damage. Although its primary use remains to pick off one or two targets with a well-aimed strike, *lightning bolt* devastates in a similar manner to *fireball* if fired down a long line of enemy combatants.

Unfortunately, the selection of line spells is anything but expansive. Beyond *lightning bolt*, and the metamagic-enhanced variants thereof, there exist few damaging spells with line areas.

Cones

Line effects are the easiest to use, but cones can be the most devastating. They typically affect foes close at hand and far away, and their areas often cover more squares than other spells available at the same level.

As with line spells, the spellcaster must stand on the party's front line to cast the cone without harming allies. Since cones tend to affect a much wider area than lines, this is often more difficult.

Before casting a cone, a spellcaster should stand 5 feet behind melee combatants, leaving an open space between allies. Enemies who approach the caster suffer attacks of opportunity from the fighters, and when the time is right, the spellcaster can step forward (using a 5-foot step) and cast the cone spell without hitting his friends. Should a monster get past the line of fighters and engage the caster in melee, it makes itself vulnerable both to flanking and the cone spell.

If cast in narrow halls, cones function much the same as lines. Like lines, they never harm the caster, and the selection of damage-dealing cone spells is similarly poor. On the other hand, many useful supernatural abilities affect cone-shaped areas, including most dragons' breath weapons. If the party includes a magic user capable of casting *shapechange* to turn into a dragon, that character might make better use of cone effects.

Spreads and Bursts

The most popular damage-dealing area-of-effect spells, bursts and spreads are almost always the least useful in dungeons. Nonetheless, such spells retain a valid place in a spellcaster's repertoire, if only due to their frequency of use.

A *fireball* affects forty-four squares, dealing 5d6 points of damage when cast at its lowest level. This means that even the weakest *fireball* holds the potential to deal 220d6 points of damage if a Medium or Small creature occupies every square. That equates to 220-1,320 hit points worth of damage dealt in one turn. Unfortunately, enemies rarely accommodate such effective use.

Usually wider than the typical dungeon hall or room, bursts and spreads often make it difficult to avoid friendly targets. The only way to truly get effective use out of bursts and spreads is to cast them from long ranges at large clusters of enemies. However, most dungeons offer few opportunities to do this. Should a spellcaster find himself with an opportunity to unload his burst spells without harming his companions, he should take full advantage of the chance.

An adventuring spellcaster who hopes to rely on burst and spread spells to attack his enemies should find companions with the appropriate elemental resistances and acquire those resistances for himself. Some creatures heal or gain benefits when affected by certain types of damage and having such an ally might make a burst spell into that PC's best friend.

Without such protection, the caster could rely on cover to improve the effectiveness of his bursts and spreads. Bursts are especially easy to control in this way, but both types of

spells can be managed with a little planning. Doorways and corners cut short the area of a burst's effect, and a few fighters with tower shields might create a mobile barrier against bursts. Of course, intelligent monsters might use similar tactics to defend themselves from PCs' spells and their own. Just remember that such strategies don't work against spread effects as they easily turn corners and blast around shields.

Special Areas

Some spells have nonstandard areas of effect. Spells such as *call lightning*, *fire storm*, and *meteor swarm* affect peculiar areas and might be confusing to use, but the greater versatility of their unconventional areas make them invaluable in a dungeon.

Call lightning essentially affects a single square on a battlefield, but it does so with a vertical column of lightning. This makes it an excellent spell to attack foes in melee with your allies. The spell becomes even more useful when fighting mounted foes or foes on the ground and in the air. Remember that the bolts of lightning need not touch the ground. They can be used to hit multiple flying targets or foes on the ceiling. Just keep in mind that the bolt must be vertical. *Call lightning storm* works the same way but causes more damage with each bolt.

Fire storm, the divine answer to *meteor swarm*, deals unmatched damage to many foes. Because the spell fills individual 10-foot cubes with fire, it shapes to fit virtually any space and, in the dungeon environment, easily avoids allies while still encompassing most enemy formations. Be aware that you can't stack damage by overlapping cube areas; that's the purview of *meteor swarm*.

The pinnacle of damage-dealing arcane spells, *meteor swarm* makes tacticians drool. The possibility of dealing 32d6 points of damage to a single foe without a saving throw makes this spell well worth learning. When you cast this spell, you can choose to aim your ranged touch attacks at a single target, and the effects of the spheres overlap and stack. Even if you miss, creatures in the area must make saving throws against four explosions of flame that each cause 6d6 points of damage. Of course, each sphere's explosion is a 40-foot radius spread, making casting the spell from a distance a necessity.

Spell Selection

When considering which damage-dealing spells to learn or prepare, the spell's area should be an important part of your decision. Consider the environments in which you're likely to combat foes and the means you have at your disposal to protect yourself and your allies from your spells.

Lightning bolt and *fireball* cause considerable damage, but if you're unlikely to hit more than half a dozen foes with such spells, *flame arrow* might offer a better choice at that level. Although it's unlikely to cause as much damage as *fireball* or *lightning bolt* in a single round, *flame arrow's* duration of 10 minutes per caster level cannot be overlooked.

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After giving fifty arrows the ability to cause an extra 1d6 points of fire damage, the ammunition can be distributed to benefit many archers. With multiple users directing where this damage goes on a case-by-case basis and without having to operate within a set range, *flame arrow* makes up for what it lacks in direct, one-round power with versatility.

Often, target-based spells will prove better choices at their level. *Meteor swarm* is deadly, but it's largely useless when your party is surrounded and engaged in melee. In such a situation, *weird* might save your character's life. Affecting any number of targets within a small area and with the potential to cause instant death, *weird* could clear the area of enemies, giving you the breathing room to cast more devastating area-of-effect spells.

Metamagic Feat Selection

Wizards, clerics, and druids gain the most options for combat spells, but sorcerers unquestionably gain the upper hand in terms of using metamagic feats. Feats like Widen Spell and Enlarge Spell are less useful when applied to spells prepared in advance, since they require a clear view of the tactical situation to be effective. If a regular *fireball* already affects too much space in most dungeons, a widened one is a waste of a higher-level spell slot. A sorcerer, however, applies these "tactical" metamagic feats on the fly and gets more use out of them as a result.

Energy Substitution reigns as the ultimate tactical metamagic feat (see the Energy Substitution sidebar). Fire giants? Use an energy substitution (cold) *fireball*. Trolls? An energy substitution (fire) *chain lightning* solves the problem. Especially for wizards with feats to burn, multiple variations of Energy Substitution prove highly useful choices. A sorcerer should always possess at least one variation to effectively double the versatility of his arsenal. What makes this feat so powerful is that it allows the use of the best area spells for the tactical situation, regardless of the elemental strengths or weaknesses of the enemy at hand. Thus, to broaden the limited selection of spells for each area type, particularly lines and cones, Energy Substitution becomes invaluable.

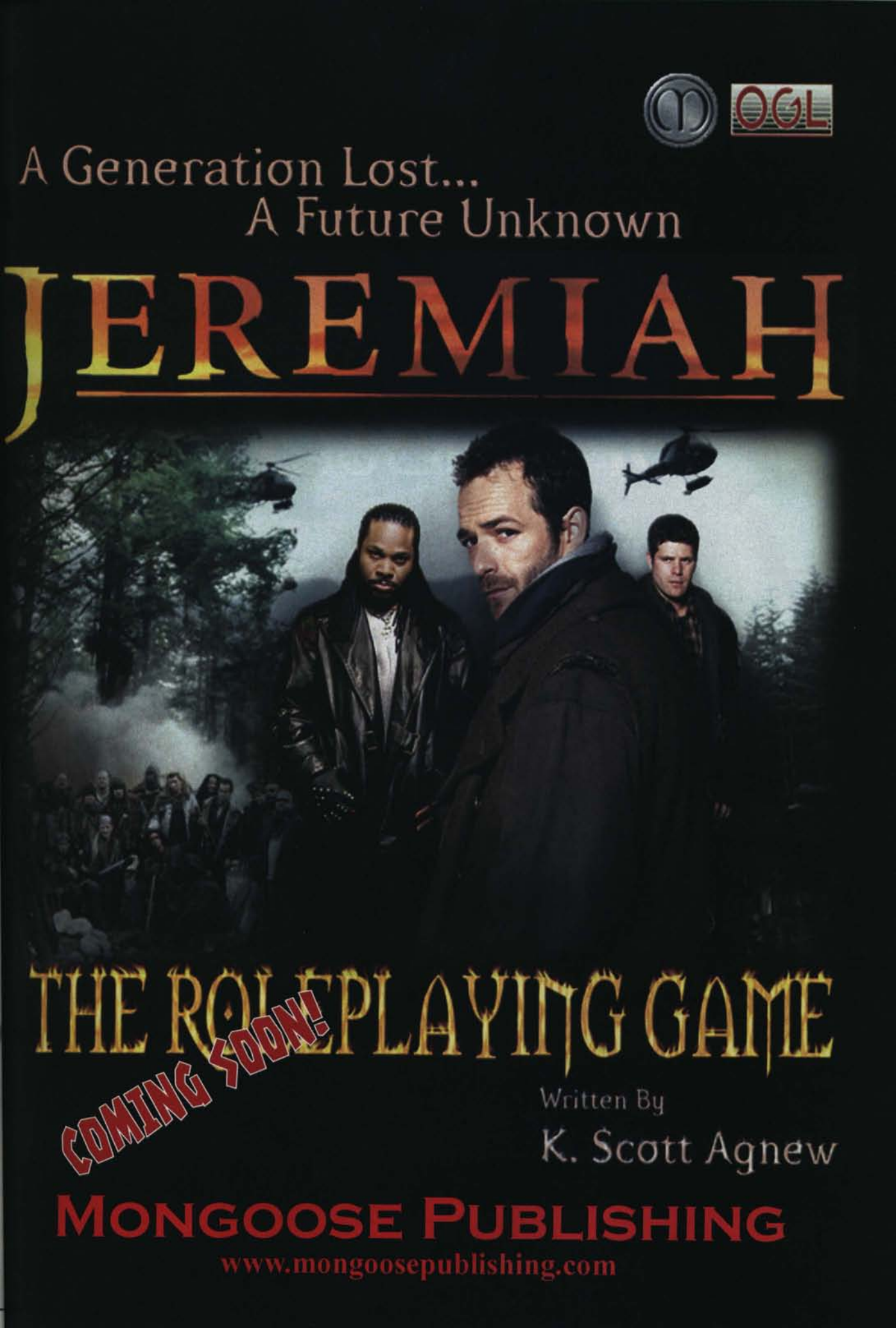
Energy Substitution [Metamagic]

You can modify an energy-based spell to use another type of energy instead. This feat appears in the *Complete Arcane*.

Prerequisite: Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, any metamagic feat.

Benefit: Choose one type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, or fire). You can then modify any spell with an energy descriptor to use the chosen type of energy instead. An energy substituted spell uses a spell slot of the spell's normal level. The spell's descriptor changes to the new energy type—for example, a fireball composed of cold energy is an evocation [cold] spell.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times, choosing a different type of energy each time.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A SURGE OF THEURGY

Feats That Combine Class Abilities

Magic comes in myriad forms. Already a complicated force, magic constantly increases in complexity. Deities and mortals alike develop or discover new spells, artifacts, and unique supernatural effects. Most wizards, clerics, and their ilk live their entire lives without giving much thought to the miracles that magic provides. Some, most notably the mystic theurges who study the interrelation of arcane and divine magic, push the boundaries of magical knowledge. Through experimentation, chance, and blessed serendipity, those who delve into the mysteries of magic—in all its permutations—have discovered new and exciting ways to combine forces. Others, particularly druids and rangers, have discovered new ways of combining the gifts granted them by the forces of nature. Whether a result of the straightforward research of a mystic theurge or as a divine gift of knowledge to a pious paladin, the following feats allow those who take them unprecedented access to new and wondrous combinations of abilities.

Aligned Theurgy [General]

You can combine different sources of power when using spells that contain the same alignment descriptor (chaotic, evil, good, or lawful).

Prerequisites: At least one alignment-based cleric domain (Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law), ability to cast arcane spells with the same alignment descriptor as your domain.

Benefit: Choose one of your alignment-based cleric domains: Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law. You can cast spells with the related spell descriptor as if your caster level was the sum of all your spellcasting classes that grant spells with that alignment-based spell descriptor. The effect applies only to a single alignment descriptor chosen when the feat is taken.

For example, a 3rd-level cleric/4th-level wizard with the Chaos domain and this feat can cast any spell with the chaotic descriptor as a 7th-level caster.

This does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It only increases your caster level when casting spells of the appropriate descriptor.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new alignment-based domain and spell descriptor.

Alternative Source Spell [Metamagic]

You can prepare any of your spells as either divine or arcane.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast both divine and arcane spells.

Benefit: You can choose to prepare any of your divine spells as arcane spells or any of your arcane spells as divine spells. An alternative-sourced spell uses up a spell slot from the class that normally grants the spell. Such a spell is prepared normally. An alternative-sourced spell is cast as if your caster level were 1 level lower. For example, a 1st-level cleric/6th-level wizard casts a divine *fireball* as a 5th-level wizard.

Combined Empathy [General]

You can combine your wild empathy ability from different classes.

Prerequisites: Druid level 1st, ranger level 1st.

Benefit: When using your wild empathy ability, add both your druid levels and your ranger levels to your roll.

Customize Domain [General]

You open up one of your domains to new sources of magical power.

Prerequisites: At least one domain, ability to cast 3rd-level divine spells.

Benefit: Choose one of your cleric domains. You permanently exchange spells on your domain spell list for similar spells on any spell list you have access to. You customize your domain when you choose this feat; you cannot later change your domain spells or return to your original domain spell list. You can only choose to substitute spells that are of equal or lower level and that adhere to the following restrictions by domain. Note that certain spells gain descriptors depending on how they're cast; you can choose such a spell as a spell with the descriptor you require so long as you only cast the spell in such a manner as to give it that descriptor.

Air: Spells with the air or electricity descriptors.

Animal: Spells that specifically affect animals, spells that summon animals, spells that have animals in their name (such as *bull's strength* and *owl's wisdom*).

Chaos: Spells with the chaotic descriptor.

Death: Spells that create death effects or that deal with the undead.

Destruction: Evocation spells that deal damage.

Earth: Spells with the earth descriptor.

Evil: Spells with the evil descriptor.

Fire: Spells with the fire descriptor.

Good: Spells with the good descriptor.

Healing: Spells of the healing subschool.

Knowledge: Divination spells.

Law: Spells with the lawful descriptor.

Luck: Abjuration spells or spells that allow a bonus on a d20 roll.

Magic: Any kind of spell, but you must select a spell one level lower than normal.

Plant: Spells that specifically affect plants, spells that summon plant creatures, spells that have plants in their names (such as *treestride*)

Protection: Abjuration spells.

Strength: Spells that grant a bonus to Strength or cause a penalty to strength.

Sun: Spells with the light descriptor.

Travel: Spells that alter speed or provide movement.

Trickery: Illusion or transmutation spells that alter appearance.

War: Spells that begin with "mass."

Water: Spells with the water descriptor and spells that create or modify water.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new domain.

Diversified Casting [General]

You can cast spells from one of your prohibited schools.

Prerequisites: A prohibited school.

Benefit: Choose a prohibited school. You may add up to three spells from that school to your spell list. Note that this also allows you to use spell-completion and spell-trigger items using the spells you add to your spell list.

Special: You can gain this feat a number of times equal to the number of prohibited schools you possess. Each time you take this feat, it applies to a different prohibited school.

Druidic Theurgy [General]

You can apply knowledge gained in another spellcasting class to druid spells.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast 3rd-level druid spells, ability to cast spells from a different spell list.

Benefit: Choose a spellcasting class other than druid in which you have at least one level. For the purpose of casting spells from the druid spell list that also appear on the chosen class's spell list, your caster level equals the sum of your levels in the druid class and the chosen class. For example, a 5th-level druid/2nd-level cleric can cast spells that appear on both spell lists as a 7th-level caster.

This does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It only increases your caster level when casting the appropriate spells.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new non-druid spellcasting class in which you have at least one level.

Elemental Theurgy [General]

You can combine alternate sources of power when using spells that contain the same elemental descriptor (air, earth, fire, or water).

Prerequisites: At least one elemental domain (Air, Earth, Fire, or Water), ability to cast arcane spells with the same elemental descriptor as your domain.

Benefit: Choose one of your elemental domains: Air, Earth, Fire, or Water. You can cast spells with the related spell descriptor as if your caster level was the sum of all spellcasting classes that grant spells of that elemental spell descriptor. The effect applies only to a single elemental descriptor chosen when the feat is taken. For example, a 5th-level cleric/3rd-level wizard with the Fire domain and this feat can cast any spell with the fire descriptor as an 8th-level caster.

This does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It only increases your caster level when casting spells of the appropriate descriptor.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new elemental domain and spell descriptor.

Holy Mount [General]

Your special mount is a divine gift.

Prerequisites: Ability to gain a paladin special mount, any other divine spellcasting class level 1st.

Benefit: When determining the abilities of your paladin special mount, you can combine the levels of your paladin class with those of your other divine spellcasting classes. For example, a 5th-level paladin/3rd-level cleric with this feat grants his paladin special mount abilities as an 8th-level paladin.

Hymnist [General]

You strengthen the power of your bardic music by infusing it with your faith.

Prerequisite: Bardic music ability, ability to cast divine spells.

Benefit: Perform is always a class skill for you. You gain a bonus on all Perform checks equal to your Wisdom bonus.

Easy Metamagic [Metamagic]

One of your metamagic feats is easier to use.

Prerequisite: Any other metamagic feat.

Benefit: Choose a metamagic feat you already have. When preparing or casting a spell modified by that feat, lower the spell-slot cost by one. You can never reduce the spell-slot cost below one level higher than the spell's actual level. For example, taking this feat for the Quicken Spell feat reduces the spell slot cost of a quickened spell from four levels higher than the spell's actual level to three levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat, you must choose a new metamagic feat.

Theurgic Bond [General]

You uncover secrets to connecting more fully with your animal companion or familiar from studying another type of magic.

Prerequisites: Ability to gain a familiar, ability to gain an animal companion.

Benefit: Choose a familiar or animal companion you already have. When determining the abilities of your chosen familiar or animal companion, you can combine the levels of your spellcasting classes that grant either an animal companion or a familiar. For example, a 4th-level druid/3rd-level sorcerer can grant his familiar all of the abilities that a familiar of a 7th-level sorcerer would normally have.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a different familiar or animal companion.

Theurgic Creationist [General]

You can create items using the knowledge gained from all of your spellcasting classes.

Prerequisites: Any item creation feat, able to cast spells from two different spell lists.

Benefit: When acquiring item creation feats or when creating magic items, you can add together the caster levels of all your spellcasting classes to determine your caster level. For example, a 1st-level bard/1st-level cleric/3rd-level wizard could gain Craft Wand and create magic items as a 5th-level caster.

Theurgic Empathy [General]

Your performance knowledge aids you when dealing with animals.

Prerequisites: Bardic music ability, druid level 1st or ranger level 1st.

Benefit: When using your wild empathy ability, you can add your bard levels to your roll.

Theurgic Mount [General]

Your special mount benefits from your arcane knowledge.

Prerequisites: Ability to gain a paladin special mount, ability to cast arcane spells.

Benefit: When determining the abilities of your paladin special mount, you can combine the levels of your paladin class with the levels of your arcane spellcasting classes. For example, a 5th-level paladin/4th-level sorcerer can grant his paladin special mount abilities as a 9th-level paladin.

Theurgic Specialist [General]

Spells from your specialist school benefit from your knowledge of other spellcasting classes.

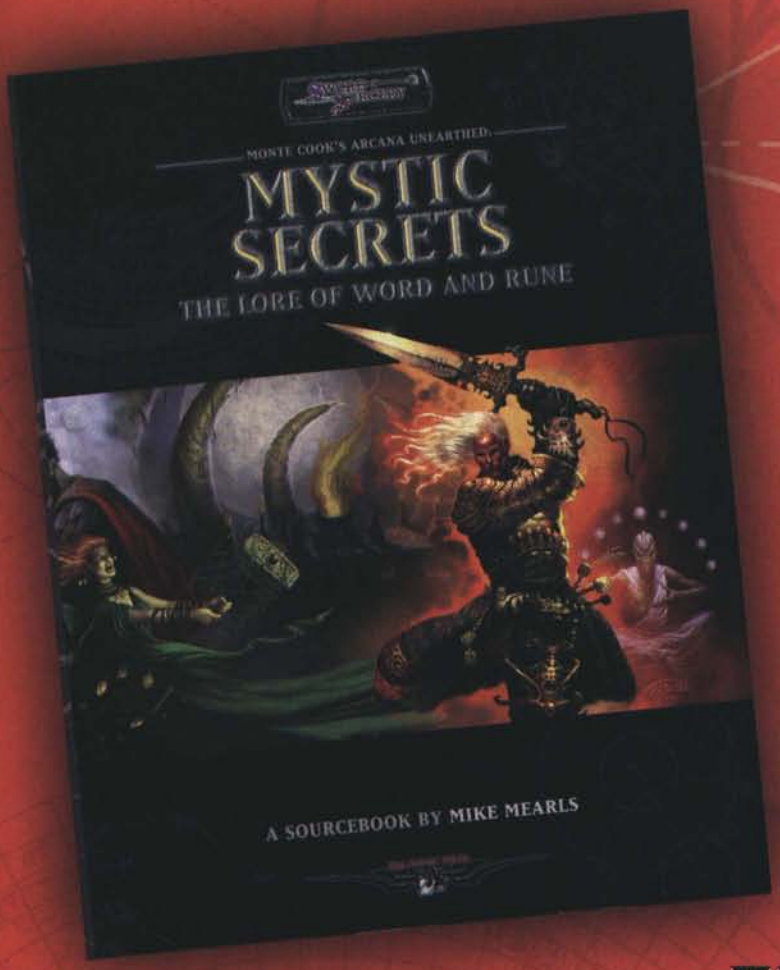
Prerequisites: Specialist wizard level 3rd, any other spellcasting class level 1st.

Benefit: When casting a spell from your specialist school (off the spell list of any spellcasting class you have), you can add together the caster levels of all your spellcasting classes to determine your caster level. For example, a 3rd-level druid/1st-level sorcerer/3rd-level diviner could cast any spell from the divination school as a 7th-level caster (even when casting a druid or sorcerer spell).

This does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It only increases your caster level when casting spells of the appropriate school.

UNEARTHED ARCANA METAMAGIC

If you like how this article's feats manipulate and alter the way magic works and want to see more options to change magic in D&D, check out *Unearthed Arcana*. Chapter 5 of that book presents almost 50 pages of new or slightly altered magic systems and new ways of using metamagic feats. Page 139 presents metamagic components, which allows you to replicate certain metamagic feats with expensive or rare items. You can find two different methods for sorcerers to use metamagic feats on pages 140 and 151. Page 151 also discusses two forms of spontaneous metamagic. A spell point system introduced on page 155 has its own metamagic rules, as does the recharge method on page 157.



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by Amber Scott
illustrated by Peter Bergting

THE ECOLOGY OF DUERGAR

The ringing of hammer on anvil, choking blankets of forge smoke, repetitious chanting, and ceaseless toil—such bleakness embodies the world of the duergar. Living in the darkness, laboring to serve their god, the duergar find no joy in anything save the fierce satisfaction of a task thoroughly completed. With hearts as cold and hard as iron and souls as dark as coal, duergar desire merely to please their grim god and to slay all who oppose his will.

This article examines the life and habits of the xenophobic duergar, including their history, physiology, and outlook, as well as ways to defeat them. *Races of Stone* offers further information on the lives and ways of dwarves of all types

HISTORY OF DUERGAR

Duergar claim that their god, Laduguer, forged the world. In the time before time, the world was but a chill nothingness, containing neither life nor light. The desire for creation existed, and the empty void of the universe pulsed with the uncontrolled desire to be. From that hunger formed the figure of a dwarf wielding a hammer, and with his hammer he shaped the void into a cold, dark world of eternal twilight. Laduguer beget Laduguer, it is said; he birthed himself out of sheer will and the desire to create.

Laduguer thus peopled the first world with his children, the duergar; the grey dwarves. He gave them the desire and skill to work, and provided them with materials with which to toil. He commanded them to serve him with production, to emulate their creator by creating new and wondrous things. The duergar call this the Time of Creation, where they worked in peace to forge magnificent items for their god, and all were content.

Even then, sometimes duergar creations floundered. Some attempted to make great things and failed, and thus Laduguer cast the unworthy into his forge as punishment. One such ambitious dwarf sought to set himself above

the rest, making himself superior to the others, although Laduguer made all equal. He worked in secret, struggling to master the power that only Laduguer commanded—the ability to create life. He forged strange creatures; ugly, spindly things that he flung from his workshop in disgust. The Lone Craftsman, as duergar call him, struggled day and night for a year, each time failing in his creation and throwing the mewling, misshapen monstrosities into the wilderness. All the creatures, races, and monsters of the world—animals, giants, elves, humans, kobolds, and orcs—arose from the Lone Craftsman's anvil. Thus, duergar created all other races.

After a year of failure, the Lone Craftsman finally succeeded. By his experience and will, he forged another dwarf. He made his creation taller, stronger, and more beautiful than the duergar, with skin of copper, hair of bronze, and gems for eyes. The Lone Craftsman was admiring his creation when Laduguer found the secret forge and flew into a terrible rage.

The Lone Craftsman fell to his knees, begging his god for mercy. He pleaded that he made his creation only as a tribute to Laduguer's greatness.

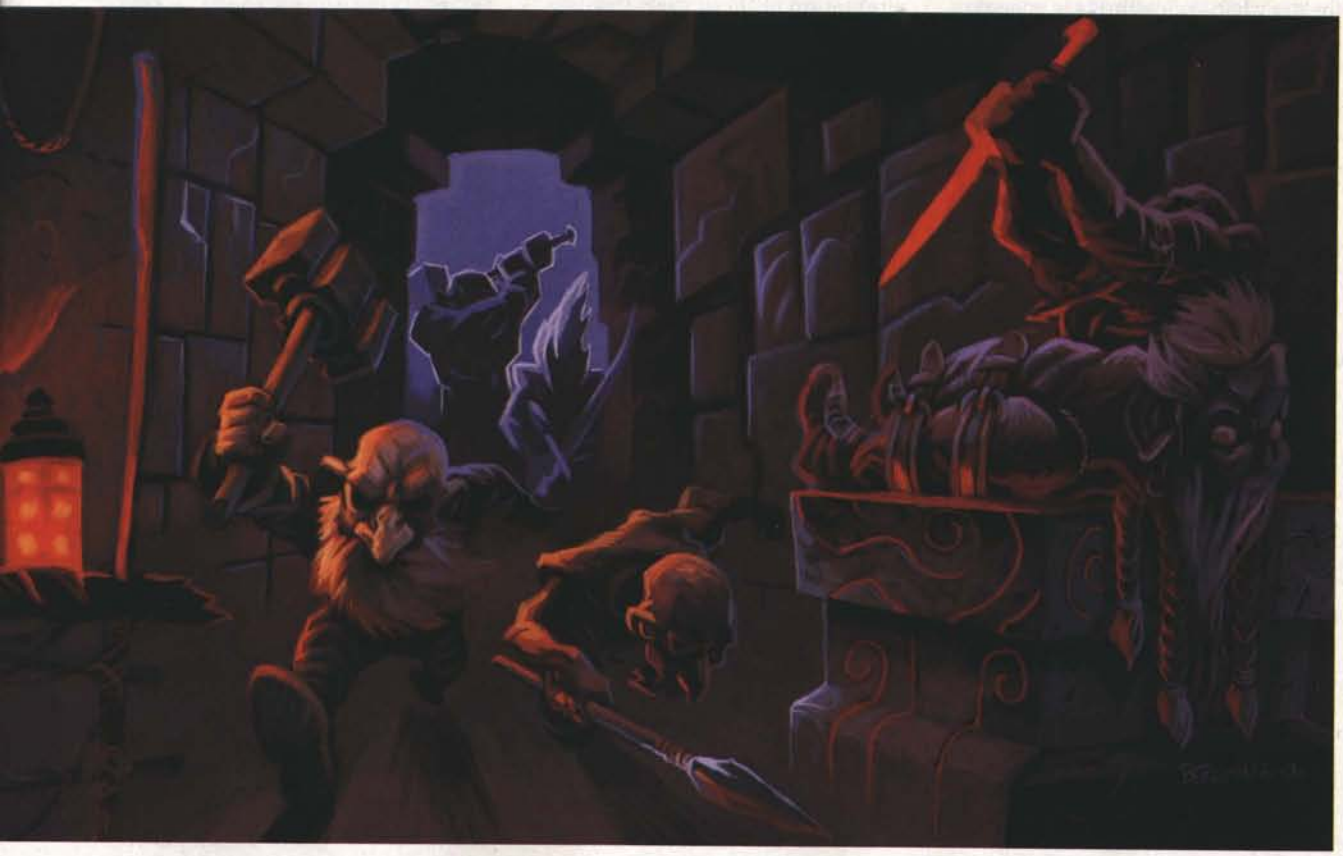
Laduguer roared, "Insolent fool! Do you think you can improve on my work by creating a life greater than your own? You do this for your own glory, not mine!" He struck the Lone Craftsman and turned him into a shrieking, gibbering madman without the skill, patience, or talent to create anything ever again. Thus was born the first derro.

The damage already done, this began an age known as the Time of Perversion. The works of the Lone Craftsmen and their offspring spread over the world, forming societies and raising the best of their miserable races to the status of gods—gods who defiled the world with bright sunlight, green things, song, and other foolishness. The duergar despised these rejected

DUERGAR KNOWLEDGE

The following table shows the results of a Knowledge (local) check as it relates to the duergar. Inhabitants of the Underdark and adventurers that make forays into its depths might know this information.

Knowledge (local) DC	Result
10	There are many subraces of dwarves. Some of these breeds lurk deep within the earth and toil for dark purposes.
15	Duergar despise all other races but reserve their most vicious hatred for other dwarves. They avoid the sun and bright light at all costs.
20	Duergar have the power to increase their size and become invisible. They create some of the most masterfully crafted goods in the world, although such items often lack ornamentation.
25	Duergar life revolves around the worship of their god Laduguer. They are particularly stealthy and resistant to paralysis, poisons, and illusions.



creations, but none so fiercely as the dwarves descended of the Lone Craftsman's finest achievement: those bright-faced dwarves who live in the mountains and fancy themselves great craftsmen rivaling Laduguer's children. Duergar refuse to suffer these other dwarves' existences and hunt them relentlessly.

Now duergar live apart from the other races, in hidden strongholds beneath the earth where they work ceaselessly for the glory of their god. There they train as fighters, spies, and craftsmen to ensure the survival of their people. They trade by necessity, grudgingly offering the least of their wares (still among the finest crafts in the world) for food and materials other races provide. They disdain all things pleasant, bright, and beautiful as useless frippery, and refuse to sully their exquisite creations with such pointless accoutrements.

All duergar sneer at the fantastic lies the other races spin about their origins, because the grey dwarves know the truth. Each duergar exists merely to serve Laduguer, and they all dream of the day when their efforts are enough for Laduguer to vanquish the other races, blot out the sun, and bring about the Time of Perfection. Then duergar will return to the cool, dusky surface where they can forge in peace for all eternity.

PHYSIOLOGY OF DUERGAR

Averaging about 4-1/2 feet tall and more slender than most dwarves, duergar have dull grey skin that seems to blend with the shadows around them. With lean muscles as hard as iron, they move in near-silence with a fluidity strange to dwarves. Most duergar are completely bald, although some women develop lank rings of black, white, or gray hair and men often keep wiry beards. Overall, duergar bodies are studies in ultimate efficiency.

Duergar eyes are almost uniformly pitch-black and curiously flat, making a duergar's stare incredibly unnerving. Gray dwarves say that Laduguer bestowed incredible sight on his children as a divine blessing so they might hunt their light-dwelling cousins more easily. Thus, duergar who invoke the wrath of their priests usually have their eyes put out as punishment, while the birth of a child with grey or white eyes is considered a terrible omen.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY OF DUERGAR

Duergar society revolves around the worship of Laduguer, and gray dwarves draw no distinction between secular and religious authority. The priests rule as they always have and always will.

Laws are handed down and enforced by thuldors, the priests of Laduguer. Thuldors wear unpolished iron breastplates emblazoned with the broken crossbow bolt of Laduguer and holy brands of this symbol on their foreheads. Thuldors choose only the strongest duergar to join their ranks, but even then the initiation rites, which involve branding, torture, and performing feats of superhuman endurance, cull the weak and unworthy. The culmination of these trials involves tying an initiate between two crushing blocks of stone and leaving him in solitude for a week.

Gray dwarves forbid all other races access to their cites, as the presence of such abominations sullies their homes. In a few cases, duergar trade outposts allow other races to settle nearby, but only if they obey the priesthood. Duergar trade using heavily guarded caravans or other far-traveling emissaries. Drow make frequent use of duergar items, although they patronize the dwarves and act as if their goods were inferior to drow-crafted items. Duergar despise the dark elves for this reason, but they readily accept their coin.

Duergar spies, known as darkhafts, often travel among gray dwarf caravans. They gather information about the races they trade with and use that information to further duergar goals. As weapons traders, the duergar profit from conflict, and while the world never lacks in that, darkhafts sometimes give things a push. They enjoy encouraging the rivalry between two opposing factions, coaxing ill will to the surface like an erupting boil and then supplying both sides with weapons and armor. Not only do such underhanded acts open up new markets for their weapons, but they sow bloodshed among the countless races the gray dwarves despise.

Occasionally, duergar foster conflicts between small drow outposts or isolated tribes of other races, such as

LADUGUER

Intermediate God (Lawful Evil)
The god of the duergar, Laduguer occasionally answers the prayers of other dwarves. The Gray Protector, as he is called, demands constant toil and a rigid adherence to order from his subjects, many of whom are stolid craftsmen, slavers, or would-be warlords.

Symbol: A broken crossbow bolt.

Portfolio: Magic weapon creation, artisans, magic, duergar.

Domains: Evil, Law, Magic, Protection.

Favored Weapon: Warhammer.

Clerical Training: Would-be clerics of Laduguer engage in hour after hour of repetitive prayer, punctuated only by hard physical labor or similar hardships. Those that endure the process become clerics and inflict similar mind-numbing initiations on the next generation of Laduguer's followers.

Quests: Laduguer's quests often involve awakening—and hopefully controlling—some long-buried evil. If an army of slaves is trying to unearth a fallen, ancient labyrinth-temple, Laduguer is probably behind it.

Prayers: Prayers to Laduguer are simple one- or two-sentence affairs, but they're repeated dozens of times, with exactly the same rhythm and intonation.

Temples: Laduguer has simple temples unadorned with decoration. Many have torture chambers, prison cells, or battle arenas attached to them.

Rites: Laduguer offers his followers few rites, because time spent in ceremonies is time spent away from proper duties.

Herald and Allies: Laduguer's herald, Garludor, is a particularly sinister duergar 10th-level rogue/10th-level assassin. When not on a quest for his god, the herald spends much of his time haunting the forges of Laduguer's faithful, assuring that work progresses and punishing negligent or unskilled craftsmen with his death attack. Laduguer's allies and those he most commonly sends to fulfill *planar ally* spells are bearded devils, barbed devils, and pit fiends.

derro or kuo-toa. Darkhafts exacerbate hostilities with well-placed words and false rumors until combat erupts and one faction destroys the other, at which point a unit of duergar soldiers attack, easily crushing the weakened "victors." Darkhafts carefully hide all evidence of duergar involvement after the dwarves' slaughter and looting, thus avoiding future trade complications.

DUERGAR LAIRS

Along with their grim cities, duergar toil and hoard their greatest works within the treasure-vaults of the thuldors. These unique strongholds are both massive workshops and bleak temples of Laduguer. They often have similar features but never have the same layout.

At least four duergar soldiers guard the entrance to a treasure-vault, as well as possibly one or two priests. Duergar require no light, so adventurers approaching carrying torches, lanterns, or magical illumination immediately give themselves away to the guards. Beyond the guards, a complex series of magical and mechanical locks and traps ward the stronghold's entrance.

The inner halls of thuldor strongholds usually lack living guardians, instead holding countless unique and ingenious traps and constructs. Wanderers through these halls should move cautiously and carefully, using long poles to test suspicious areas and ready *detect magic* and *dispel magic* in case of magical traps. Thuldors often create golems, particularly stone golems, and adventurers should consult with sages to learn ways to defeat these guardians.

The vault's center chambers hold the duergar's greatest treasures, countless masterfully crafted weapons, tools, and magic items piled upon mountains of rare ores, gems, and coins. Sometimes thuldors tame giant monstrous spiders or summon planar allies to serve as guardians for these vast troves. Thuldors who desire solitude—or those punished with it—sometimes reside here, relying on their magic to sustain them. Whether defending their work or trying to regain their brethren's favor, priests encountered here guard the vault with their lives, and raiders should be appropriately wary.

VS. DUERGAR

Resolute and fanatical combatants, duergar fight not just to defend themselves and further their goals, but to destroy the abominations that are all other races. When facing such a combination of natural cunning and magical abilities, only the most prepared might hope to stand against a determined duergar.

Dealing with Invisibility and Darkness: Lurking in the darkest depths of the Underdark and with the ability to turn invisible once per day, few ever see duergar coming. Those seeking out duergar or passing through their lands should ready several scrolls of *see invisibility* or *invisibility purge* to even the odds. Although such spells reveal invisible duergar, the darkness the gray dwarves favor still offers its own hindrance. Parties traveling through the Underdark with most forms of visible illumination (torches, lanterns, *light* spells, and the like) only attract more danger. However, since duergar and many other denizens of the Night Below are sensitive to exceptionally bright light, adventurers should rely upon *daylight* and scrolls or wands of that spell. Adventurers who wish to remain undetected and who don't all possess darkvision should equip themselves with *potions of darkvision* or similar magic. Yet even these magical measures won't help a group detect a stealthy duergar, as all duergar benefit from a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks. Thus, high Listen and Spot bonuses and spells that augment these skills (like *owl's wisdom*) should see frequent use.

Magic Both Natural and Divine: With the power to enlarge themselves and a strict religious culture, magic almost always comes into play when facing duergar. Duergar warriors often use their *enlarge person* ability before charging into combat, while clerics make frequent use of *aid*, *bull's strength*, and *deeper darkness* to assist their allies and extinguish magical light. *Dispel magic*, or at least *reduce person*, thus becomes necessary to even the odds. Conversely, grey dwarves are resistant to spells, particularly phantasms (like *nightmare* and *phantasmal killer*), and they are immune to all paralysis effects. Spellcasters planning on facing duergar should focus on spells that don't allow saving throws or that deal damage even on a successful save (such as *Melf's acid arrow* or *fireball*).

Poisoned Weapons: Duergar are immune to all forms of poison and make frequent use of it. Often, a volley of crossbow bolts coated in black adder venom, greenblood oil, or other Constitution-sapping injury poisons precedes duergar rushing into melee. Thus, adventurers should always carry antivenom and potions or scrolls of *delay poison*, *neutralize poison*, and *lesser restoration*.

Keep Out of Harm's Way: Duergar gain Strength bonuses from their *enlarge person* spell-like ability and often have bonus hit points from high Constitution scores. Those fighting duergar should stay out of reach and make full use of ranged weapons. Since gray dwarves have a speed of 20 feet, even when enlarged, using superior mobility and hit-and-run tactics easily wears down enemy duergar. If you can't avoid melee combat, attacks and spells that reduce Constitution or Strength scores (such as a rogue's crippling strike ability or the *ray of enfeeblement* spell) might help.

Beware of Spiders: Duergar frequently make use of the varied forms of monstrous spiders that roam the Underdark. Noted for making exceptional steeds and beasts of burden, these arachnid mounts allow the duergar to move much faster and even over vertical surfaces with ease. Given the duergar's penchant for stealth and poison, giant monstrous spiders or even phase spiders might serve the gray dwarves as deadly companions. Such a pair might easily sneak up on a party invisibly and ethereally before striking with surprise.

by Rahul Kanakia
illustrated by Andrew Hou

MYTHS OF THE SHADOW

Large cities attract criminals like dung attracts flies. They come with cold eyes, plotting sinister schemes to bring them both wealth and power. Yet even more frightening than such thugs and thieves are those who dare to play such dangerous players against each other.

For centuries, the shadow of the Black Cloaks loomed like a deadly cloud over numerous cities, selling their skills to the highest bidder. When a courtier became careless or his enemies became powerful, the Black Cloaks struck from the shadows and vanished without a trace. Many scoundrels, from petty criminals to angel-faced schemers, passed through the ranks of the Black Cloaks, their identities, exploits, and tools recorded in only one place—*Myths of the Shadow*, a Black Cloak manual. This tome holds the secrets of the Black Cloaks and is as much a spellbook as a manual of thieving, disguise, and evasion. Among treatises on slipping bonds and histories of the sinister organization lurk the group's best kept secrets: a host of unique spells known only to the most sly and dark-hearted magic users. Since the supposed fall of the Black Cloaks, *Myths of the Shadow* has appeared many times in the hands of numerous wizards. However, as is its elusive nature, every time it surfaces, it quickly slips away, ether lost by or stolen from even the most watchful masters.

Myths of the Shadow physically possesses the same anonymity as its past masters. Unremarkable with utterly black covers, this tall, thin tome hides itself among those around it, changing its appearance to mirror theirs. Those looking for the book must succeed at a DC 18 Search check to notice it among others. Even those who know exactly where the book should be must make a DC 12 Search check to find it.

Myths of the Shadow contains many appropriately elusive and misleading spells from the *Player's Handbook* among its more mundanely sinister writings. It is most notable, however, for containing the signature spells of the Black Cloaks. Since most are relatively simple spells, those who merely dabble in magic or seek to augment their more stealthy abilities easily grasp them. The following spells appear in that book.

APPRAISING TOUCH

Divination
Level: Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 min./level

Ahren, once known as the Unblinking Eye, was a fence and a master of detecting forgeries and counterfit goods. He frequently used this spell to discover when his fellow Black Cloaks were attempting to cheat him.

You gain an intuitive insight into the value of objects you come into contact with. You gain an insight bonus equal to your caster level on Appraise checks to determine the value of items while this spell is in effect.

Even if you fail an Appraise check while this spell is in affect, you never incorrectly estimate the actual worth of an item by more that 50% of its actual value.

DEAD END

Illusion (Shadow)
Level: Asn 1, Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Targets: One creature/level touched
Duration: 1 hour/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless) or Will disbelief (if interacted with); see text
Spell Resistance: Yes or no; see text

A sneak-thief used to evading those pursuing him, the Black Cloak Falarn developed this spell to buy him a more time during tight chases.

This spell flawlessly disguises the spoor left by the targets, concealing their tracks, scent, and other signs of their passage with an illusion that defeats even the senses of taste and touch. Any creature making a Search check, using the scent ability, or using the Survival skill to track a creature in the area the targets pass through is considered to be interacting with the illusion and may make a Will save to disbelieve. Creatures that succeed at the save may detect the targets' passage but suffer a –5 penalty on Search, Survival, or Wisdom checks to track the targets of the spell or find signs of their passage. Spell resistance does not apply to this effect. Creatures merely passing through an area the targets passed through do not count as interacting with the illusion.

Targets of this spell gets a Will save to negate it, and spell resistance applies.

Material Component: A pinch of some odoriferous spice.

MARKED MAN

Divination
Level: Asn 2, Rgr 1, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 day/level

Although not a particularly skilled assassin, Karandras could seemingly find his quarry anywhere. He would use this spell to stalk his prey for days, learning their routines, before finally dropping in on the targets when they least expected it.

Upon casting this spell, you become attuned to the specific creature that owns the spell's focus item. (A creature is considered to own an item if it was the last creature to carry the item on its person for 1 day or more. You do not count when considering what creature was last to carry an item.) This attunement grants you a +10 bonus on Search and Survival checks made to track the item's owner or find evidence of his passage. This spell does not give you insight into who or what the creature he is attuned to is or where that creature ultimately might be. Also, the spell does not provide a trail that is not already there nor does it provide you with the benefits of the Track feat.

NEW SPELLS WITHIN MYTHS OF THE SHADOW

Those who created the new spells for *Myths of the Shadow* kept in mind many of those who cast spells, and they ensured that a variety of spellcasters can benefit from the fruits of their labor. The following list presents some of the Black Cloaks' most infamous spells.

Assassin Spells

1st-Level Assassin Spells
Dead End: Illusions conceal the targets' spoor.
Serene Visage: Grants a bonus on Bluff checks.
Shock and Awe: Reduces a surprised creature's initiative roll.
2nd-Level Assassin Spell
Marked Man: Helps track a subject.

Bard Spells

1st-Level Bard Spells
Appraising Touch: Grants a bonus on Appraise checks.
Dead End: Illusions conceal the targets' spoor.
Serene Visage: Grants a bonus on Bluff checks.
Shock and Awe: Reduces a surprised creature's initiative roll.

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

1st-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spells
Appraising Touch: Grants a bonus on Appraise skill checks.
Dead End: Illusions conceal the targets' spoor.
Serene Visage: Grants a bonus on Bluff checks.
Shock and Awe: Reduces a surprised creature's initiative roll.
Spontaneous Search: Searches a 30-foot-cube area in 1 round.
2nd-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell
Marked Man: Helps track a subject.

Ranger Spell

1st-Level Ranger Spell
Marked Man: Helps track a subject.

Arcane Focus: An object owned by the creature or a piece of the creature to be tracked, such as a tuft of hair or a fingernail.

SERENE VISAGE

Illusion (Glamer)
Level: Asn 1, Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 min./level

For decades, the Black Cloak Saernavar served on his city's council, his integrity never questioned even as lesser men fell by the wayside under charges of graft and scandal. Considered the only honest man in the government, the city heaped increasing power upon him. Only upon reading his mocking memoirs, published after his death, did the true extent of his crimes—many of which he had pinned on his underlings—come to be known.

Simple illusions aid your attempts to be persuasive. You gain an insight bonus equal to your caster level on all Bluff checks.

SHOCK AND AWE

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Asn 1, Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Targets: 1 flat-footed creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart.
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A quick spell and a quicker dagger always ensured that the Black Cloak assassin Ahren could perform the most daring ambushes without suffering a scratch.

This spell distracts its targets, preventing them from reacting with the deftness they might otherwise possess. Only effective when cast in the surprise round of combat and on flat-footed creatures, this spell causes those it affects to suffer a –10 penalty on their next initiative rolls. Targets that cannot be caught flat-footed (such as a rogue with uncanny dodge) cannot be affected by this spell.

SPONTANEOUS SEARCH

Divination
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One 30-ft.-cube
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates or none (object); see text
Spell Resistance: Yes or no (object); see text

After consolidating control of his gang, Master Traijin's lust for wealth combined with his paranoia in interesting ways. He obsessed over his belief that the businesses in his neighborhood were holding back on his cut. He would sweep into one of them, mentally tabulate the value of everything in the place, calculate his share down to the copper piece, take his share, and stalk out without saying a word. He developed this spell for use during these surprise audits.

You instantly become aware of the location and types of inanimate objects in the spell's area as if you had taken 10 to use the Search skill on the entire affected area. The spell also reveals what is inside containers, even locked ones, if your Search result beats a DC equal to the Open Locks check required to overcome the locking mechanism. The effects of this spell are purely mental and merely give you an awareness of the area's contents; it does not reveal traps, secret doors (although it could alert the spellcaster to objects beyond them), open locks, reveal the contents of books or scrolls, or actually put items in your possession.

Creatures in the area may make a Will save to negate your ability to learn what objects they possess.

Material Component: A silk glove.

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ARTIFACTS OF THE PHARAOHS

The faithful of the Pharaonic pantheon believe a battle rages between their deities, a continuous fight of good versus evil. Osiris, Re-Horakhty, and Isis guide the just and lawful, while Set, Apep, and Sobek try to undermine and destroy by bringing chaos and evil to the world.

Their hands guided by divine force, the high priests work secretly in their temples' inner chambers crafting magic items blessed by the gods themselves. These items increase their followers' abilities, allow for infiltration into other churches, or annihilate their deities' enemies. Presented here are fourteen magic items that bring the immortal war from the heavens to mortal lands.

by Kevin Hamilton
illustrated by Niklas Janssen

BELT OF THE CAMEL

Made from woven camel hair and blessed by clerics of Isis, the *belt of the camel* defends travelers on long treks across the desert. The belt protects the wearer from extreme heat, as per *endure elements,* but not cold. In addition, the wearer never becomes thirsty and never requires water for nourishment, although the need for food still exists. The belt must be worn for 24 hours before its powers take effect.

Faint abjuration; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *create water, endure elements;* Price 3,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

CANOPIC JARS OF THE GUARDIANS

Specially instructed clerics perform an embalming ceremony when a guardian of Osiris or cleric of Anubis dies. The ceremony involves the removal of the cleric's vital organs and preserving them in a set of four urns called *canopic jars of the guardians.* The lids of the four jars appear as protectors of each organ: a baboon for the lungs, a jackal for the stomach, a human for the liver, and a falcon for the intestines. When placed together and the sacred words are spoken by a cleric of good alignment, an act that requires a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity, the four jars cause a guardian of Osiris to rise-up. Treat the newly raised guardian as a mummy (see the *Monster Manual*) created as if by *create undead,* except that it is of lawful good alignment and lacks the despair ability. The mummy follows the commands of the cleric that raised it and exists for 3 hours or until destroyed. The jars can be used once per day.

Strong necromancy; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *create undead;* Price 18,000 gp (for all four jars); Weight 2 lb. each.

CARRION GAUNTLET

The hinged and jointed pieces of the *carrion gauntlet* are made from bits of bone, carapace shards, and the dried flesh of various creatures. Created by evil clerics in an attempt to harness the power of undead, the gauntlet constantly thirsts for life force. The wearer of this *+1 gauntlet* can use it to cast *vampiric touch* at will as though cast by a 5th-level caster.

Moderate necromancy; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *vampiric touch;* Price 32,300 gp; Weight 1 lb.

CARTOUCHE OF IMHOTEP

A *cartouche of Imhotep* is a small, flat piece of gold with Imhotep's name engraved into it. Clerics wear these symbols on necklaces so Imhotep will guide their hands as they create wondrous objects in his name. Anyone wearing a *cartouche of Imhotep* gains a +5 competence bonus on any Craft check.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *mending,* Craft (any) 5 ranks; Price 5,000 gp; Weight —.

CLOAK OF THE DESERT

This cloak is made from a light brown, sturdy material, velvety on one side with a rough sandpaperlike texture on the other. If the wearer wraps it around herself, the *cloak of the desert* allows her to merge with sand or any sandstone large enough to encompass her body, in the same manner as *meld into stone.* This effect can last to up to an hour and can be used three times per day.

Moderate transmutation; CL 6th; Craft Wondrous Item, *meld into stone;* Price 18,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

EYE OF HORUS

Pharaohs throughout the ages have kept vigilant watch over their people using special agents of Re-Horakhty. Clerics created the *eye of Horus,* supposedly blessed by Re-Horakhty himself, to be worn by these agents to protect them. The *eye of Horus* is a single lens that, when placed over one eye, seems to meld into the user's flesh. It takes a full-round action for the lens to be

GODS OF THE PHARONIC PANTHEON

Deities and Demigods describes the Pharaonic pantheon in great detail. Below, you'll find some information about the deities mentioned in this article. To learn more about them, pick up a copy of that book, make a trip to your local library, or check out websites like **nemo.nu/ibisportal/0egyptintro/index.htm**.

If you don't want to use the Pharaonic pantheon in your game, these magic items easily adapt to deities you use or to cultures in your campaign. The FORGOTTEN REALMS hosts the land of Mulhorand and incorporates several gods of the Pharaonic pantheon. EBERRON's Aerenal elves might create and use such items. Although Greyhawk does not have any Egyptian-themed area (perhaps besides the oddly named Erypt region), the items presented in this article could easily be relics of the setting's many faiths. Of course, the magic items presented in this article don't need to be associated with any deity, and you should feel free to place them anywhere in your game or have your spellcasting character make them.

Anubis: Judge of the dead, this lawful neutral deity appears as a man with a jackal head and tail.

Apep: Apep is a neutral evil demigod of snakes and fire. He exists only to destroy and is an enemy of all other Pharaonic gods (although Set sometimes allies himself with Apep).

Bast: This chaotic good, cat-headed goddess is the patron of cats and provides protection.

Hathor: Cow-headed goddess of love, dance, fate, and motherhood, Hathor is neutral good.

Imhotep: A mortal raised to godhood, the neutral good Imhotep serves as patron to scientists, architects, and physicians.

Isis: The wife of Osiris and father of Re-Horakhty, the neutral good Isis reigns over fertility, magic, and marriage.

Osiris: Lord of life and death, Osiris is a lawful good god of the harvest, nature, and the underworld.

Re-Horakhty: Ruler of the pantheon, Re-Horakhty is the lawful good, hawk-headed god of the sun.

Set: A chaotic evil deity of death, evil, night, drought, and sandstorms, Set is a jealous and power-hungry god who murdered Osiris (who was revived).

Sobek: The lawful evil, crocodile-headed god of water and river hazards, Sobek's motto is "eat or be eaten."

absorbed by the user. A tattoo then appears surrounding the eye resembling the *eye of Horus*. The user can will the lens back out of her flesh as another full-round action. When the user dies, the eye resurfaces.

Once absorbed, the *eye of Horus* allows its user to *detect evil* at will as a standard action. In addition, the user may cast *protection from evil, disguise self,* and *misdirection,* each once per day and only on himself.

Faint divination; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *detect evil, disguise self, misdirection, protection from evil;* Price 13,200 gp; Weight —.

KEEPER'S GUIDE

Clerics of Osiris often place traps in the tombs of dead nobles to protect their treasures and bodies from grave robbers. Eventually, the clerics need to return to these tombs to bury the next generation of nobles and their belongings. Since the knowledge of the exact location of every trap can be forgotten (and cannot be written down for fear of theft), the clerics created the *keeper's guide* to help them. The *keeper's guide* is a ring made of solid turquoise with a single lapis lazuli stone set in it. This ring grants the wearer the ability to find traps as a rogue and a +3 insight bonus on all Search checks to find traps.

Moderate divination; CL 6th; Forge Ring, *find traps;* Price 24,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

RIVER SANDALS

Created by followers of Set and Sobek to better infiltrate and spy on the other churches, *river sandals* leave no footprints on any surface, making the wearer unable to be tracked as if affected by the spell *pass without trace* (except that the wearer can still be tracked by scent). The wearer can also walk across the surface of liquids, as per *water walk.*

Moderate transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *water walk, pass without a trace;* Price 47,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

ROBE OF THE BURNING SERPENT

Clerics of Apep use white robes with depictions of flaming serpents to identify and reward the serpent god's faithful followers. The *robe of the burning serpent* looks like such a robe, but the serpents are woven with golden thread. Once per day, the wearer can change herself into a yuan-ti abomination per the *polymorph* spell for 10 minutes.

Robes of the burning serpent are created only for the most devout servants of Apep and punish any unfaithful who try to wear them. If a person of good alignment dons the robe, she takes 1d4+10 points of fire damage every round until the robe is removed. If a person of evil alignment wears the robe, the flaming serpents glow briefly, signifying to others that she is indeed a true follower of Apep.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *polymorph, fire trap,* creator must be of evil alignment; Price 40,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

SAND OF SET

A small black bag with pictures of entwined snakes woven into the fabric contains the *sand of Set.* Clerics sift through piles of sand and chose only the finest, darkest sand to bless in the name of Set. When a user tosses a handful of the *sand of Set* onto the ground within 5 feet of herself, 1d4+1 medium vipers (see the *Monster Manual*) appear to follow their creator's mental commands. The vipers remain for 7 rounds or until destroyed. The bag contains enough sand for three uses.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon nature's ally IV;* Price 4,200 gp; Weight —.

SCARAB CHARM

A turquoise scarab set in silver, this oval charm measures about 3 inches in length. A *scarab charm* is a thrown weapon that may target a specific creature or 5-foot square and has a range increment of 10 feet. Upon impact, the charm creates a swarm of scarab beetles (use the locust swarm entry on page 239 the *Monster Manual*). The swarm immediately attacks the closest target, friend or foe, and remains for 3 rounds or until dispersed. If two targets are equal distance from the swarm, the user may choose which target the swarm attacks. The charm is destroyed once used.

Faint conjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon swarm;* Price 300 gp; Weight —.

SCORPION BRACERS

Scorpion bracers are made from the shells of giant desert scorpions. Clerics of Set use ancient ceremonies to magically infuse these bracers with power, giving the wearer a +5 resistance bonus on Fortitude saves against all poisons.

Moderate abjuration; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance;* Price 3,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

TIARA OF BAST

Gold headpieces with various sizes of inlaid carnelian stones, these tiaras allow clerics of Bast to keep watch over her domain. When someone of good alignment wears the tiara, he can speak with any feline animal as if having cast *speak with animals.* In addition, once per day the user may influence a feline animal as per the spell *charm animal.*

Faint enchantment; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *charm animal, speak with animals;* Price 8,000 gp; Weight —.

VESTMENT OF JUDGMENT

A vestment created in the name of Anubis, *vestments of judgment* are black with gold trim and depict in gold thread the scales of judgment on the front and two jackals facing away from each other on the back. After a person of good alignment wears the vestment for thirty days, she is able to use it to cast *true resurrection* once per month. If a person of evil alignment dons the vestment, he must make a DC 16 Fortitude save each round or contract mummy rot (see page 190 in the *Monster Manual*).

Strong conjuration; CL 17th; Create Wondrous Item, *true resurrection, contagion,* creator must be of good alignment; Price 95,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

by Chris Perry

GETTING SCHOOLED

In D&D, a specialist wizard focuses on a single school of magic at the expense of one or two others. This specialization grants a +2 bonus on Spellcraft checks related to the wizard's specialization as well as a bonus spell at each level of his specialist school. However, these minor adjustments offer little to distinguish a specialist wizard from a generalist wizard. The feats in this article work to fix that dichotomy. Most require a wizard to specialize in a specific school, granting a specialist wizard certain abilities that focus on what makes that specialty unique.

ABILITY ENHANCER [GENERAL]

Your helpful transmutation spells aid you more than normal.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (transmutation), transmuter level 1st.

Benefit: Any transmutation spell you cast that enhances ability scores increases the ability scores by +2 more than it normally does. For example, casting *bull's strength* with this feat grants the subject a +6 enhancement bonus to Strength, instead of the usual +4 enhancement bonus.

ABJURATIVE POTENCY [GENERAL]

You cast more effective protective spells.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (abjuration), abjurer level 1st.

Benefit: Any abjuration spell you cast that provide a bonus to Armor Class adds a bonus +1 higher than normal. For example, an abjurer with this feat who casts *shield* gains a +5 shield bonus instead of a +4 shield bonus.

CHARMER [GENERAL]

You know how to strengthen the lure of your enchantments.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (enchantment), enchanter level 1st.

Benefit: Add +1 to the Difficulty Class of all saving throws against your spells from the enchantment (charm) subschool. This bonus stacks with the bonus provided by Spell Focus feat.

ENHANCED SHADOW REALITY [GENERAL]

Your shadow-based spells are more real.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (illusion), illusionist level 1st.

Benefit: Your illusion (shadow) spells deal one-fifth (20%) more real damage if disbelieved. For example, a creature summoned with a shadow conjuration spell deals two-fifths (40%) of the damage a real creature of the same kind would deal if the target of the spell disbelieves it, instead of only one-fifth (20%).

EVOCATION RESISTANCE [GENERAL]

You suffer less damage from evocation spells.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (evocation), evoker level 1st.

Benefit: You take 1 less point of damage per die rolled from evocation spells. For example, if struck by a *fireball* cast by a 5th-level caster, you take 5d6–5 points of damage.

GIRDED SOUL [GENERAL]

Your exposure to necromantic energies has strengthened you against their assaults.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (necromancy), necromancer level 1st.

Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus on saves made to resist the effects of any energy drain or death effect.

HEAVY TELEPORT [GENERAL]

Your *teleport* spells move more.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (conjuration), conjurer level 1st.

Benefit: Your conjuration (teleportation) spells can teleport one additional Medium or smaller creature. For example, a 9th-level conjurer with this feat can take himself and four other Medium creatures when he casts *dimension door*. Spells that teleport objects instead of people are not affected by this feat.

HIDDEN THOUGHTS [GENERAL]

You can more effectively resist intrusions into your mind.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (divination), diviner level 1st.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on Will saves made to resist divination spells. In addition, you gain a +4 bonus on Intelligence checks made to notice a scrying sensor.

POTENT ENCHANTMENT [GENERAL]

Your enchantment spells can affect more creatures.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (enchantment), enchanter level 1st.

Benefit: Enchantment spells you cast that affect a certain number of Hit Dice, such as *sleep* or *hypnotism*, affect an additional 3 Hit Dice of creatures. For example, a *sleep* spell cast by an enchanter with this feat would affect 7 Hit Dice worth of creatures instead of only 4.

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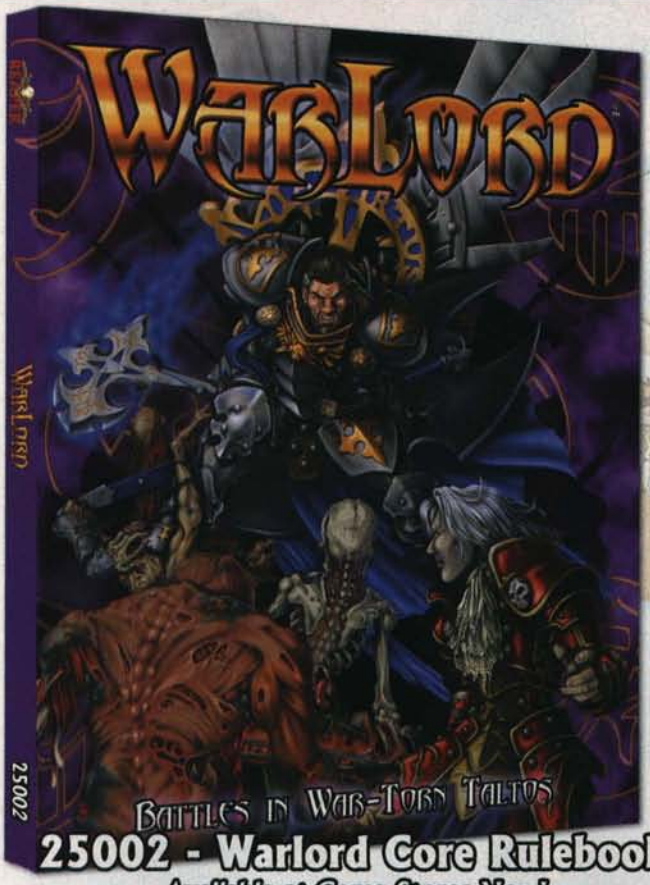

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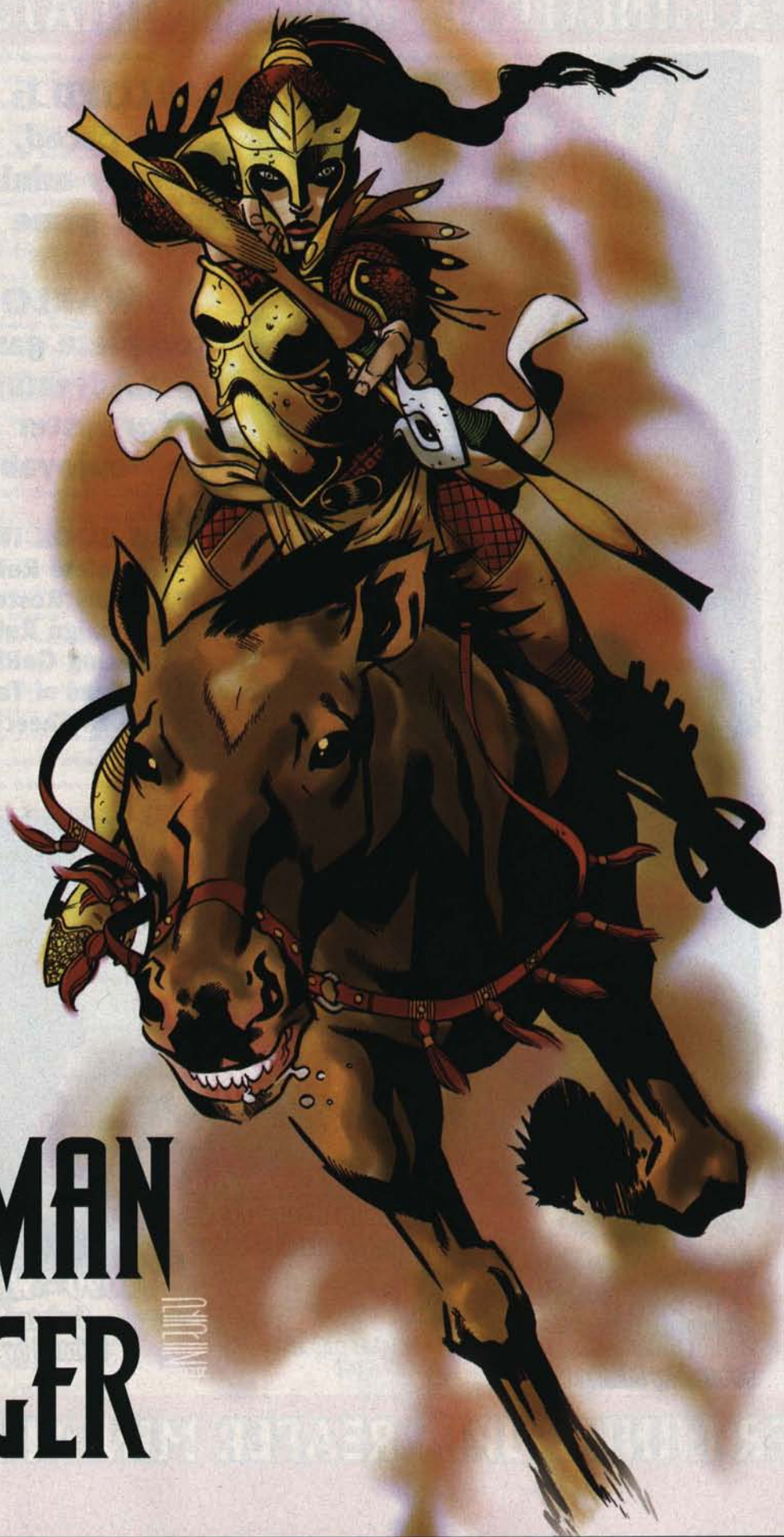

THE BOWMAN CHARGER

RUIN

by Thomas M. Costa
illustrated by Ramón Pérez

Many nations and many armies make the claim to have the finest cavalry or the most splendid horsemen. None, however, are born and raised in the saddle like the great nomadic cultures of the steppes. From a young age, children learn to ride and shoot, and many receive bows and arrows as gifts. By the time children become adults, they are skilled riders and excellent marksmen.

As adults, these warriors fight almost entirely from horseback, making extensive use of their riding tradition to attack their enemies from a distance. When their foes rush into battle, the nomadic warriors retreat, avoiding melee to shoot their enemies from a safe distance. Some consider them cowards, but this strategy minimizes their losses in a battle. The wandering tribes lead a harsh life, and consequently many place a low value on the lives of those outside their culture.

These mighty warriors live in vast, open steppes where a nomadic lifestyle is both common and necessary. Examples of such people include the Mongols under the great khans, the Valenar elves of EBERRON, the Rovers of the Barrens and the Plains of Paynim's numerous tribes in GREYHAWK, and the Tuigan hordes of the FORGOTTEN REALMS. Not all members of these horse-riding steppe dwellers become bowman chargers, but those who do rise to great esteem among their clans and tribes.

Bowman chargers wear the best light armor they can acquire. They almost exclusively use the composite shortbow, scimitar, and spear, although a few occasionally make use of other weapons. Depending on their particular culture, needs, or beliefs, some bowman chargers make use of falchions or kukris.

Fighters have the easiest time becoming bowman chargers, and indeed nearly every bowman charger has multiple fighter levels, but the majority of bowman chargers have at least one level of another class. Most who multiclass take levels in barbarian or ranger, although a fair number of fighter/paladins join the ranks of bowman chargers. Other classes gain little or no benefit from the class and most find its requirements difficult to meet.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the bowman charger prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Bowman chargers are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light and medium armor and bucklers.

Burst of Speed (Ex): The bowman charger can urge her mount to greater than normal speeds. This ability doubles the distance of the mount's normal charge movement (the mount must charge to use this ability). The bowman charger can use this ability once per day without risk of injury to her mount. She can try to use this ability more than once per day by "pushing" her mount as per the Handle Animal skill (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 74). If the bowman charger succeeds at her skill check, the mount makes an additional charge using burst of speed, but it must then make a DC 20 Fortitude save after the conclusion of the charge. If it succeeds, the mount becomes fatigued; if it fails, it becomes fatigued and takes 2d6 points of damage.

Two as One (Ex): At 1st level, the bowman charger can attune herself to her mount by spending two weeks alone with it. She can bring no food or water for herself or her mount, and instead they both must eat and drink when and where they can. During those two weeks, the bowman charger must learn to eat and sleep in the saddle. At the end of those two weeks, she and the mount become attuned. The bowman charger gains a bonus on all future Handle Animal checks made to influence the attuned mount equal to her bowman charger level.

The attuned mount and bowman charger gain specific benefits, depending on the character's level in bowman charger, as shown on the table below. The bowman charger only gains these benefits when riding her attuned mount, and her mount only gains these benefits when its attuned bowman charger rides it. A bowman charger can't be attuned to multiple mounts at the same time, but should a mount die or should the bowman charger wish to attune to a new mount, she must spend two weeks with it as previously described.

Bowman Charger Level	Special Ability
2nd	Riding mastery
4th	Speed of trust
6th	Elusive
8th	Riding dervish
10th	Horse sense

Riding Mastery (Ex): The bowman charger gains a bonus on her Ride checks equal to her bowman charger level.

Speed of Trust (Ex): The bowman charger gains a bonus on her initiative checks equal to half her bowman charger level when she begins combat on her attuned mount. In addition, her mount gains the use of the Dodge

HIT DICE D10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a bowman charger, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Skills: Handle Animal 8 ranks, Ride 8 ranks.

Feats: Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (composite shortbow).

CLASS SKILLS

The bowman charger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

feat as long as the bowman charger is riding it. Her mount can choose to dodge a different foe than the bowman charger.

Elusive (Ex): Once per round, when her mount is affected by an effect that allows a Reflex save, the bowman charger may make a Reflex save (using her bonus) instead. The result of her save becomes the result of her mount's save. The bowman charger must declare that she is going to use this ability before she makes the roll.

Riding Dervish (Ex): The bowman charger may utilize Ride-By Attack to make a powerful assault through the ranks of her foes. While riding in a straight line and using a full-round action, the bowman charger can move up to her mount's speed, making a melee attack against any foe within reach on her path. For each foe attacked beyond the first, each attack suffers a –1 penalty, so the bowman charger must declare how many foes she attacks before she starts (minimum two). The bowman charger gives up her regular attacks to take this action. This is an extraordinary ability that draws no attacks of opportunity, even if the bowman charger passes through threatened areas on her way through the assault.

In addition, her mount gains the use of the Mobility feat as long as she is riding it.

Horse Sense (Su): Once per round, when her mount is affected by an effect that allows a Will save, the bowman charger may make a Will save (using her bonus) instead. The result of her save becomes the result of her mount's save. The bowman charger must declare that she is going to use this ability before she makes the roll.

Improved Mounted Archery (Ex): At 3rd level, a bowman charger suffers no penalty when using a ranged weapon from horseback while her mount is making a double move, and a –2 penalty while her mount is running.

Weapon Specialization (Ex): At 5th level, the bowman charger gains Weapon Specialization (composite shortbow) as a bonus feat.

Improved Critical (Ex): At 7th level, the bowman charger gains Improved Critical (composite shortbow) as a bonus feat.

Greater Weapon Specialization (Ex): At 9th level, the bowman charger gains Greater Weapon Specialization (composite shortbow) as a bonus feat.

Great Khan (Ex): At 10th level, a bowman charger evinces confidence. She gains Leadership as a bonus feat, and gains a +2 bonus on her leadership score.

On the battlefield, all cohorts, followers, and allies within 60 feet of a mounted bowman charger gain a +1 morale bonus on their attack rolls while mounted.

DIFFERENT BOWMAN CHARGERS

Bowman chargers need not be horsemen of the steppes. The concept of powerful mounted archers can work with nearly any D&D culture or race. Consider these alternative ideas for the origins of bowman chargers.

Halfling Warhound Corps: Riding armored dogs into battle, the Halfling Warhound Corps accepts only the most experienced halfling riders. Those who manage to join the prestigious fighting force enter a rigorous training program that focuses not only upon riding and archery, but also upon taking up the pack mentality that allows the Halfling Warhound Corps to function almost entirely by instinct as a unit on the battlefield.

Goblin Wolflords: Feared throughout the lands that border the misty forest they claim as home, these goblins are known for their unusual tactic of dismounting and firing their bows from behind the cover of their prone mounts. When a foe comes too close, a goblin's wolf knows to stand and trip the foe, allowing the goblin to attack their prone enemy with a melee weapon.

Elven Windriders: The Elven Windriders divide their members into two forces: the pegasi riders who patrol elven lands during the day and the giant-owl-riding night patrol. Although people more often see the pegasi riders, the mysterious night patrol is the more famous of the two. Accustomed to quietly flying through the close confines of the forest, members of the night patrol even venture into caves and dungeons when threats arise from such places.

BOWMAN CHARGER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Burst of speed, two as one
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Two as one (riding mastery)
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Improved mounted archery
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Two as one (speed of trust)
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Weapon Specialization (composite shortbow)
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Two as one (elusive)
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Improved Critical (composite shortbow)
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Two as one (riding dervish)
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Greater Weapon Specialization (composite shortbow)
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Two as one (horse sense), great khan

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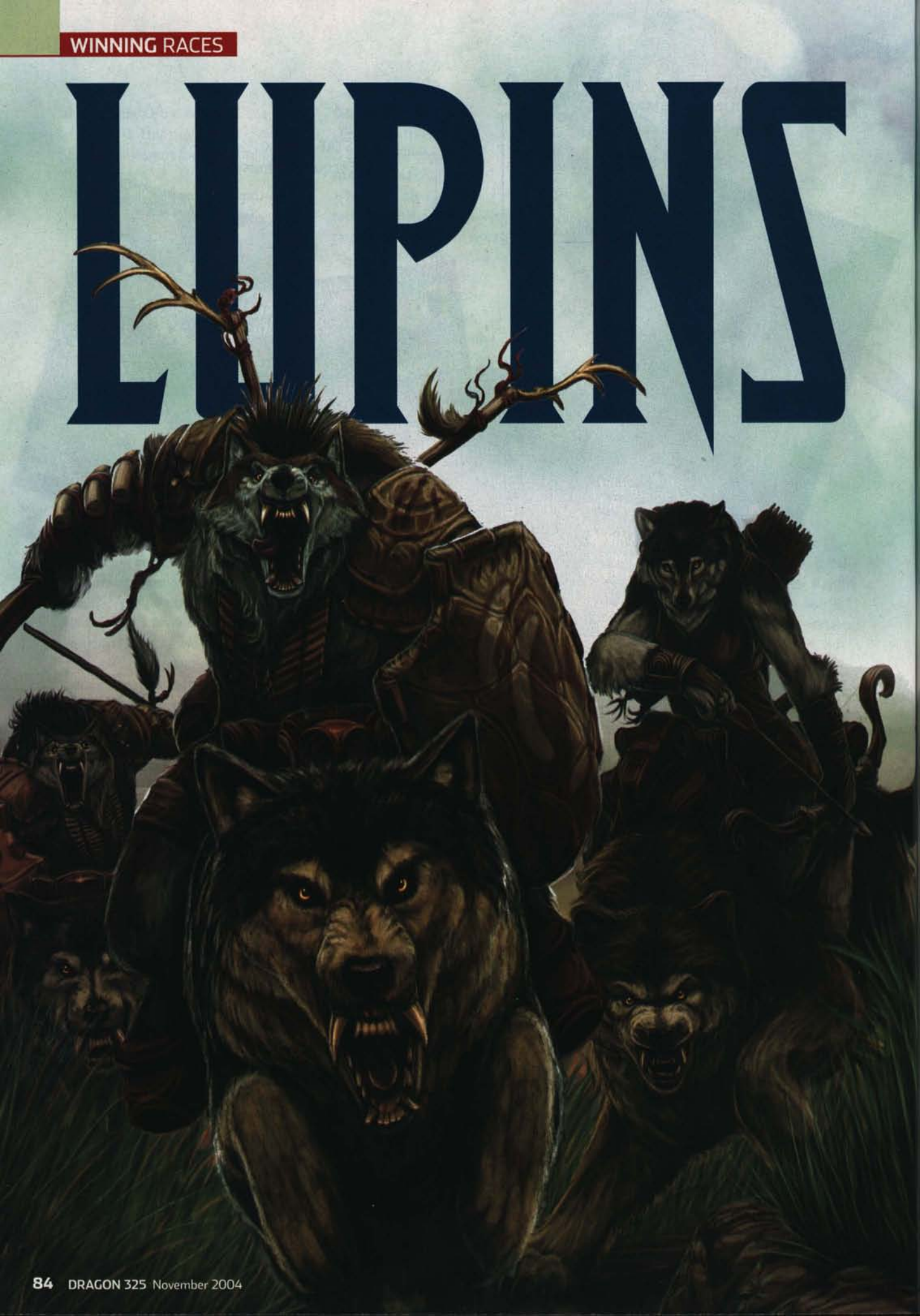
LUPINS



by Mike McArtor
illustrated by Michael Phillipi

Lupins exist at the crux of a duality, torn constantly between two mythological beginnings. Most of these dog-headed humanoids rarely ponder the subject, living their lives in the comfort of their individual families, saving such speculation for the quiet times of their infirm years. However, nonlupin sages and historians (with lupin input) frequently consider and debate this issue.

Although most people consider the debate purely academic, lupin spiritual leaders actively argue two versions of their creation. The original and most popular creation story comes down from their ancient oral tradition, marking lupins as descendants of werewolves who rejected the chaos of their monthly murderous sprees. Proponents of this theory point to the uncanny ability of lupins to sniff out werewolves as well as the obvious physical similarities. The newer origin theory, originally proposed by the lupin sage Hector Roff, argues that the fanatic enmity between lycanthropes and lupins comes from stresses placed upon the lupins by other races. Followers of his theory, called Hectorites, propose that their race came from the union of humans and gnolls, and that early lupins became famed werewolf hunters to prove to fearful human neighbors that they indeed were not werewolves themselves. Most lupins consider this theory preposterous, although the younger generations seem to favor this less idealistic belief.

Regardless of their origin, lupins have always had a tie to werewolves. The day after a lupin child proves itself weaned by eating solid foods, the village werewolf hunters, called hruffs, begin teaching it the basics of killing lycanthropes. This day, known as the child's Moonset, is only the first rite of passage for a lupin. At puberty, lupins undergo another rite, called ro'rutoo (for boys) or ro'rutah (for girls). The exact rite varies from tribe to tribe, but it typically includes spending a night on the grasslands with only a mount as company. Succeeding at this rite makes the young lupin an official member of the tribe, and allows him or her the chance to venture with an elder to a White Howl. Once a lupin's muzzle and head hair begin to whiten (a natural change for the race that comes with age) he passes through one final rite composed of fasting and intense meditation. At the conclusion of this rite, the old lupin is recognized as an elder and becomes eligible for the greatest of honors: to represent the tribe in a White Howl.

Lupins live in tribes consisting of three to twelve packs, and each pack contains two to ten adults (and several pups). Lupin tribes practice strict egalitarian democracy and usually operate without a leader (although elders in the tribe can often sway the votes of younger members). Once per year, the tribe selects a spokesperson from among the packs' elders as a representative. This individual cannot hold the post longer than a year and cannot be selected again until an elder from every other pack in the tribe has acted as spokesperson. The selected elder (and a retinue of unwed youths) then travels to a gathering of other spokesperson lupins from nearby tribes. This gathering, the White Howl, acts as both a meeting for important discussions among the elders as well as a chance for young lupins to find mates from outside the tribe. A White Howl often degenerates into a celebration that lasts for up to three weeks.

The lupins' semi-nomadic life centers upon villages composed of wooden longhouses built in a radial pattern surrounding a community space. In the middle of this space, the lupins maintain a continuous flame known as a bg'tyr. Even when the tribe moves from its village to wander the relatively dry plains for the three months of summer, the tribe's bg'tyr continues to burn inside a copper-lined cedar bowl. The task of keeping the bg'tyr lit falls upon a group of lupin girls too young to bear children—one such pup from each pack within the tribe. These girls, known as bg'tyr mates, often grow to prominence within the community in adulthood.

Many lupin tribes consider the week of the full moon an important religious time. During the three days when the moon is brightest, hruffs from nearby villages join to form hunting packs known as ah'flir. These ah'flir packs have the specific purpose of hunting down and killing as many werewolves and other lycanthropes as possible.

Personality: All lupins consider trust and loyalty the hallmarks of responsible social behavior. They generally work for the wellbeing of their community, whether a tribe, a multiracial druidic circle, or an adventuring group. A lupin always knows his duty, and he rarely relinquishes it without good cause. Dedicated and patient, lupins excel at tasks that might require long periods of waiting, and as such make exceptional trackers, vintners, and hunters.

Lupins enjoy social interactions, and despise being alone. They make friends easily, and they enjoy crowds (although not necessarily as the center of attention). Perhaps because they give their friendship and loyalty so easily, lupins hold strong grudges against those who betray their trust. Many former business partners or adventuring companions have died at the hands of lupins who felt taken advantage of or deceived.

Physical Description: Built like humans with the heads of dogs, many creatures mistake lupins for gnolls or werewolves from a distance. A short coat of fur covers a lupin from head to toe, while longer, silkier hair (much like a human's) grows from the top of their heads. A lupin's body fur tends to be monochromatic, ranging from a light gray through all the shades of brown to black, with occasional lupins sporting coats of brick

red or golden yellow. Extraordinarily rare white-coated lupins do exist, but few nonlupins ever see them. Many lupins have a lighter shade of their body fur on their muzzle, ears, and around their eyes, while their head hair tends toward slightly darker shades. White muzzle fur and head hair mark lupin elders.

Thick, leathery skin covers the palms of lupin hands and the soles of their feet, and they usually keep their clawlike fingernails and toenails cut short. Lupins have short, nonprehensile tails that they sometimes have difficulty controlling (especially when anxious or excited).

Relations: As social and gregarious creatures, lupins get along well with virtually all races. Only gnolls, goblinoids, and werewolves need fear inhospitable treatment from them. Lupins consider dwarves and half-orcs smelly and less desirable as companions or guests than elves, half-elves, or halflings. The musky scents of gnomes and humans also often agitate lupins' sensitive noses, but not to the extent that they avoid those races. Regardless, the metal goods that dwarves and gnomes often bring to lupin lands buy such guests lavish accommodations and sincere (if sometimes forced) invitations to return. For their part, dwarves enjoy the steadiness and patience of lupins, while elves favor their gregarious natures and love of wild places. Lupins don't care for cities and prefer settlements no larger than a small town.

Alignment: Their strong beliefs in community, loyalty, and trust mark lupins as highly lawful creatures. Generosity and pity for the poor also define the race, but lupins also tend to hold grudges and refuse aid to those who have wronged them in the past. Thus, many lupins are either lawful good or lawful neutral. Only rare exceptions become chaotic or evil.

Lupin Lands: Lupins tend to live within thick forests near open grasslands. Some ride fast horses or dire wolves across the steppes to bring down deer, antelope, and elk while others stay nearer their longhouses to fish or pick berries and nuts. Lupins warily watch anyone who enters the lands they consider theirs but usually allow other races to move through their territory unmolested. They actively make war against goblinoids and gnolls who venture too close to the vast swaths of territory they travel.

Religion: Like many other races, lupins have a pantheon of godlike beings to whom they pay homage. They call their deities Saints, which consist of lupins who achieved immortal greatness. Saint Renard, the chief lupin deity, represents what Pelor does to humans. Lupins respect their deities and treat them as firsts among equals, but they neither fear nor worship those in their pantheon. They find temples and organized worship fascinating, if a little silly, and rarely give more thought to their deities than a simple thanks when they bed down for the night.

Language: Lupins speak thickly accented Common among nonlupin visitors. When among their own kind, they speak Lupin, a visual as well as verbal language consisting of words as well as growls, barks, and subtle shifts of the body. The Lupin language has no "s," as lupins' long muzzles make it difficult for them to create the sound. Many of their words have only one or two syllables, and begin with hard consonants. The language also tends to use

TEACHING AN OLD DOG NEW TRICKS

Lupins originally appeared in 1981's *X2: Castle Amber*, and made a reappearance in *X9: Savage Coast*. As the Known World expanded, the lupins' role in it began to solidify. They appeared in "The Voyage of the Princess Ark" serial in DRAGON #179. There, Bruce Heard introduced the lupin pantheon and the Kingdom of Renardie, which would later reappear in TSR's *RED STEEL Campaign Setting* (RED STEEL takes place along the Savage Coast area of the Known World, MYSTARA). DRAGON #237 also presented a number of lupin breeds and gave the first rules on how to use lupins as PCs to their full potential.

MYSTARA sourcebooks have described lupin culture three different ways. This article uses the culture as presented in 1994's *MYSTARA Monstrous Compendium Appendix*. It assumes lupins live much like the Native American tribes of the Pacific Northwest.

Lupins living in the Known World have two other cultures. A minority of these lupins live as nomads on the outskirts of human civilization. Nomadic lupins have all the racial traits of the lupins presented in this article, except that their favored class is barbarian.

The more populous (and popular) lupin culture, however, exists within the lands of *RED STEEL*, where they have grown to fame as peerless vintners in their kingdom of Renardie. These Renardie lupins speak with a faux French accent and all of their place names have a quasi-French feel, which reflects their involvement with *Castle Amber*. Sophisticated and cultured, the Renardie lupins have all the racial traits of the lupins presented in this article, except that bard is their favored class and they swap the expert rider trait for a +2 bonus on all Craft checks. Renardie lupins rarely speak the traditional Lupin tongue, and instead speak Renardois. They have French-sounding names like Jean-Pierre and Anne-Marie instead of the more guttural, throaty names of their ancestors.

the short "o" and short "u" sounds and ends many of its words with a hard "f."

Names: Lupins usually present their young with two given names combined with a hyphen when written: one name from the father (usually one of his parents' names) and one name from the mother (usually one of her parents' names). Thus, a male pup whose grandfathers are Lab-Crott and Hector-Roff might get the names Hector-Lab or Roff-Crott. The parents usually choose which name comes first based purely on how the two names sound together. Female names make more use of "a" sounds and often end with a vowel or a trailing "n" sound.

Male Names: Crott, Hector, Lab, Mattaff, Renard, Roff, Turff.

Female Names: Arann, Carra, Fikenn, Loffa, Jakka, Rottie, Warra.

Adventurers: Lupins adventure for many of the same reasons as rangers or druids of any race. They excel as hunters and trackers, and tend to leave their tribes as outcasts or as youths caught in wanderlust. Lupins put aside their fears and desire to stay with their tribe in order to hunt werewolves. In a land or world infested with lycanthropes, lupins stand on the front lines and often wage personal wars against these hated shapeshifters.

LUPIN RACIAL TRAITS

- Monstrous Humanoid: As monstrous humanoids, lupins are immune to spells like *charm person* and *hold person*.
- Medium: As Medium creatures, lupins have no special bonuses or penalties due to size.
- Lupin base land speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision: Lupins can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and lupins can function just fine with no light at all.
- Acute Sense of Smell: In many ways, a lupin's acute sense of smell works like the scent ability, but without the automatic nature of scent. A lupin's nose allows it to locate and identify certain races and creatures by their smell, and to aid it in tracking.
  —A lupin automatically gets to attempt a DC 10 Wisdom check to detect a lycanthrope within 30 feet, regardless of what form the creature takes. If the lycanthrope is downwind, the range at which a lupin can detect it doubles. If it is upwind, the range is halved.
  —A lupin has a better ability to detect and distinguish the scents of creatures than a human. This gives the lupin a +5 racial bonus on Spot checks made to oppose a known individual's Disguise check if the individual comes within 5 feet.
  —A lupin within 5 feet of an invisible or hidden creature is entitled to a DC 20 Wisdom check to pinpoint that creature.
  —A lupin gains a +2 racial bonus on all Survival checks made to follow tracks. Lupins can't track by smell alone, but the olfactory clues they find aid their tracking techniques.
- Lupins suffer a –2 penalty on all saving throws against attacks based on odor (such as a *stinking cloud* spell or a ghast's stench.
- Expert Rider: Lupins always consider Ride a class skill, and they gain a +2 bonus on all Ride checks. Lupins rely on strong mounts while making their yearly nomadic movements, and even settled lupins purchase a horse as soon as they can.
- +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against werewolves. As soon as they are weaned, lupins begin learning techniques to fight their ancient foes.
- +2 bonus on Listen checks: Lupins have a keen sense of hearing.
- Automatic Languages: Common and Lupin. Bonus languages: Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, and Sylvan. Lupins tend to learn the languages of both their enemies and their friends.
- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclass lupin's ranger class does not count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters on page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). The lupin's keen senses make them natural trackers. Lupin rangers may choose humanoid (shapechanger) as a favored enemy.

LUPIN VITAL STATISTICS

The following tables might help you round out your lupin character. Use these tables by following the instructions for determining these random numbers on page 109 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Random Starting Ages

Adulthood	Barbarian Rogue Sorcerer	Bard Fighter Paladin Ranger	Cleric Druid Monk Wizard
14 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6

Aging Effects

	Middle Age	Old	Venerable	Maximum Age
Lupin	30 years	45 years	60 years	+2d10 years

Random Height and Weight

Gender	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Male	4' 10"	+2d8	120 lb.	x (2d4) lb.
Female	4' 5"	+2d8	85 lb.	x (2d4) lb.

by Mike Mearls

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

FIGHTER

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS has a stereotype that a fighter need only strap on his armor, ready his shield, and draw his sword. Nothing could be further from the truth. While many fighters select a single weapon and stick to it throughout their careers, enough variety exists between weapons that a wise fighter can and should carry a small arsenal. Don't worry about encumbrance. As a fighter, your high Strength score should allow you to carry plenty of weapons without any worry.

Primary Weapon: Many fighters define themselves by the main weapon they carry. This weapon might not be too flashy, but it provides a fighter with consistent and reliable performance.

In general, a primary weapon should offer one of two things: a 19–20 threat range or a ×3 damage multiplier. Since you plan to make a lot of attacks with this weapon, you will score most of your critical hits with it. A broad threat range increases the total number of critical hits you can score, while a large multiplier makes those critical hits count.

Many fighters favor the longsword—and for good reason. It deals a decent amount of damage, has a good threat range, and is one-handed. The greataxe and greatsword are the best weapons for fighters who want to trade AC for a big punch, with the greataxe's ×3 critical damage allowing it to end some fights in one blow.

Of course, like all rules, this one has an exception: the spiked chain. The spiked chain provides reach without preventing attacks against adjacent enemies. If you want to invest in the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat, this is probably your best bet. The bastard sword and dwarven waraxe also make good exotic weapon choices. On average, they deal 1 point of damage more than a longsword or battleaxe, making either of them a good choice if you want to use a shield.

Bows and Crossbows: Unless you focus on archery, you should always be in melee. Buy these weapons only if you have the spare cash. The crossbow is a simple weapon for a reason—fighters have little use for it. It's slow to load and nullifies your Strength bonus. Eventually, a composite longbow might make a good choice, but at low levels, you should stick to thrown weapons. Javelins deal decent damage and have a long range increment.

Flail: The flail makes up for its average damage, low critical multiplier, and small threat range with versatility. Nothing short of an exotic weapon is as useful for making disarm and trip attacks. The flail proves even more useful if you have the Quick Draw feat. If you have more than one attack per round, you can make a trip or disarm attempt with a flail, then draw your primary weapon to attack your disadvantaged opponent.

Longspear: You never know when a reach weapon will come in handy. The longspear is a good choice compared to a glaive or ranseur because, as a simple weapon, the party's sorcerer or cleric can use it in a pinch. It's also lighter and slightly cheaper than martial reach weapons, making it less of an investment. You can drop one to pull out your primary weapon without worrying about replacing it.

Morning Star: While a simple weapon with average damage, poor critical multiplier, and small threat range, the morning star deals both bludgeoning and piercing damage. This makes it an ideal secondary weapon, especially against monsters with damage reduction based on a weapon's type.

Pick: One of the truisms of D&D is that as you gain levels, your damage die usually becomes less important than the modifiers added to it. The pick, with its ×4 critical multiplier, trades a poor damage die for the occasional, spectacular hit. If you ever face a monster with damage reduction you cannot overcome, the pick provides you with best chance for a critical that can make a real difference. While it doesn't stack up to a two-handed weapon with a ×3 multiplier like the greataxe, it does provide the biggest punch among one-handed weapons. If you do wield it in two hands, you can deal out the equivalent of six times your Strength bonus on a critical hit.

by Robert J. Hahn

CLERIC

MORE FAITH, LESS FIGHT

While the cleric class represents characters of faith, its martial skills contradict the needs of many religious archetypes. Some classic D&D characters, such as Cadderly from the FORGOTTEN REALMS or Lady Crysania from DRAGONLANCE, tend toward more scholarly or pastoral activities in their pursuit of faith than the typical D&D cleric. With a little thought and careful selection of skills and feats, clerics can follow their faith in these ways.

The Scholarly Cleric: The scholarly cleric focuses on knowledge both trivial and extraordinary, often viewing learning as a gateway to a better understanding of his deity. A life dedicated to his deity offers time for prayer, meditation, and study. All things new delight the scholarly cleric, who adventures to gain new experiences and see new things.

Academic study and spiritual pursuit makes the scholarly cleric a knowledgeable individual. He often substitutes as a "knowledge vault" for parties without a wizard or bard. A high Intelligence serves these clerics well, as does focusing on various Knowledge skills, especially arcana, history, religion, and the planes. Many scholarly clerics gain access to the Knowledge domain to benefit from more Knowledge skills, and they find Skill Focus (Knowledge) and Scribe Scroll to be good choices for feats.

Scholarly clerics often focus on abjuration or divination spells. *Commune, detect magic, protection from chaos/evil/good/law, sanctuary, speak with dead,* and *tongues* all make excellent spell selections for this archetype. Scholarly clerics tend to take the Knowledge and Protection domains.

If you have access to *Complete Divine*, you should also consider the Mind, Mysticism, and Oracle domains, as well as the *chain of eyes* spell.

The Pastoral Cleric: A pastoral cleric promotes her faith by preaching and educating the masses. She believes one becomes closer to her deity through communal worship and mass demonstrations of faith. Pastoral clerics often take a level or two of bard and make excellent evangelists.

Pastoral clerics focus on Charisma-based skills, concentrating on Diplomacy. They often take cross-class ranks in Sense Motive as their Wisdom makes them proficient at telling truth from lies. The Heal skill also often benefits a pastoral cleric as its use might win over reluctant converts. Many such clerics feel a natural gravitation toward the Negotiator and Leadership feats.

Pastoral clerics master spells that increase prowess and curative spells, as these boldly showcase the power of their deities. *Bear's endurance, bless,* the various *cure* spells, *endure elements,* and *prayer* all find their way into the repertoire of the pastoral cleric. Most of these clerics take the Healing or Travel domains.

Complete Divine can be invaluable to the player of a pastoral cleric. The Community domain presents a good choice due to its bonus on Diplomacy checks and its *calm emotions* spell-like ability. The Domination, Mind, and Pact domains, as well as the *recitation* spell, can also prove useful.

The Devout Cleric: The devout cleric seeks a better understanding of the divine through mastery of his deity's gifts—especially divine magic. A devout cleric seeks to prove himself worthy by using his divine gifts to further his deity's goals.

Devout clerics develop their skills to harness the power of their deities, so a high Wisdom and Constitution serve them well. They strive to enhance their divine understanding through learning skills such as Concentration, Knowledge (religion), and Spellcraft. Focusing on the better understanding of divine power, the devout cleric often desires the calm under fire granted by the Combat Casting feat.

The Destruction and Sun domains provide the devout cleric with excellent combat options, as do the elemental domains of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. The devout cleric tends to focus on combat spells such as *blade barrier, cause fear, flame strike, holy word,* the various *inflict* spells, *searing light,* and *spiritual weapon.* Such a cleric can often fill the wizard's role in a party while retaining the ability to spontaneously perform healing.

If you have access to *Complete Divine*, you should consider the church inquisitor and contemplative prestige classes, the Divine Metamagic and Divine Spellpower feats, the Force, Glory, and Weather domains, and the spells *castigate* and *deific vengeance.*

by J.C. Alvarez

APPRENTICE TRICKS

WIZARD

When a wizard starts her career, her first spell selection almost invariably includes attractive, versatile spells like *detect magic* and *resistance*, or combat-oriented tools such as *acid splash* or *ray of frost*. Wizards often neglect the other 0-level spells, but all tools have their uses.

Arcane Mark: Players often forget that you can use *arcane mark* on living beings. Members of a secret group or mission might identify themselves by invisible *arcane marks* on their bodies, easily revealed by *detect magic* but hidden to those not meant to see them. This spell also presents an excellent way to protect your party from doppelgangers and other shapechangers. After marking everyone in the party invisibly, *detect magic* can tell you friend from hidden foe.

Also, an *arcane mark* is permanent when inscribed on a nonliving surface. Therefore, etching *arcane marks* at strategic spots along labyrinth walls helps you avoid getting lost.

Dancing Lights: The forms created by *dancing lights* can move up to 100 feet in a single round (and without requiring concentration on the caster's part). Together with a good Hide check, you might lead a powerful creature off your track or lead a creature to danger (and five levels before *mislead*). In fact, even a real will-o'-wisp could mistake the *dancing lights* for four of its kin.

The glowing vaguely humanoid form *dancing lights* creates might also be quite useful in creating distractions or spooking opponents. Although magic users and others familiar with the spell probably won't be fooled, such a strange, obviously magical figure could panic unintelligent or superstitious creatures. When cast in tandem with spells like *ventriloquism* or *ghost sound* this spell might even fool more perceptive creatures.

Unlike *light*, you can send the *dancing lights* to illuminate a distant spot. Thus, the spell makes an excellent reconnaissance tool to send into darkened areas.

Ghost Sound: Whether making sounds alone or augmenting a variety of illusions, ghost sound provides a useful range of effects. Although a magic user might cast it alone, creating disembodied sounds primarily only to trick creatures that can't see the area the noises emanate from. However, when used in tandem with illusion spells like *silent image*, those with a distinct visual manifestation like *dancing lights*, or obscuring spells like *darkness* or *obscuring mist*, it helps creates an effect far greater than either spell could alone.

Mage Hand: With the ability to pick up and move an item under 5 pounds for as long as the caster concentrates on it, *mage hand* is easily one of the most useful cantrips available. With no need for material components, this spell seems custom-made to get magic users out of tough situations. Whether magically snatching the key to a cell door or committing some manner of long-range pilfering, *mage hand* ignores gravity and has unrestricted mobility within its range. Despite being a simple cantrip, only the 5th-level spell *telekinesis* truly eclipses *mage hand's* range of uses.

Open/Close: Open Lock DCs tend to be lower than Disable Device DCs, which causes most rogues to succeed at opening a lock just to have traps spring in their faces. However, trapmakers often set traps to activate when the container opens (rather than merely being unlocked). Once the rogue unlocks the container by mundane means, you can use *open/close* to open it at a distance to reduce risk.

Prestidigitation: First and foremost, *prestidigitation* offers an array of effects you can use over the course of one hour, allowing you to use many effects in a single casting. This makes it the most versatile 0-level spell in the game.

You can subtly change the smell, color, and taste (one per round) of a poisoned meal. You can use the spell to soil an area, possibly revealing the tracks of an invisible creature stepping through it. You can clean an object covered with a poisonous, infectious, or otherwise toxic substance.

Finally, you can use *prestidigitation* to create a number of distracting effects like lifting a character's collar, making tiny lights appear over the corner of a character's eye, and so on. While the spell cannot create an effect that requires a character to make a Concentration check, it can be a boon in a variety of roleplaying encounters.

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by Mike Mearls

THE MULTICLASSED ROGUE

ROGUE

The rogue presents intriguing possibilities for multiclassing. Since skills such as Hide, Move Silently, and Search form the backbone of the rogue's place in the party, you can afford to take a different class for a few levels, spending your new class's skill points on your rogue skills. This article looks at which classes offer the most benefits to a rogue.

In general, the rogue works best with any class that relies on light armor and superior fighting ability. Spellcasting classes tend to offer their biggest benefits only after four or five levels, a commitment that might leave your sneak attack damage and defensive abilities woefully inadequate.

Barbarian: This class offers some of the best synergies for a multiclass rogue. The bonus speed allows you to quickly move to a flanking position. Once you're there, raging increases your damage and your chance to hit. If you play a combat-focused rogue, this class offers an excellent match. Your uncanny dodge abilities also stack, a critical ability for a fighting rogue, and the barbarian's four skill points per level make it easy to keep your core skills sharp.

Bard: If you prefer to remain at the edge of the fight, the bard class provides a good match. This class's spells function while you wear light armor, while its bardic music abilities work just as well if you provide combat support with a bow or move to flank an opponent. The bard's copious skill points and sprawling list of class skills also allow you to maintain your abilities with a minimal loss.

Cleric: The cleric's spellcasting and armor proficiency make it a tempting choice, but a small number of skill points make it a poor match for a rogue. Not only do your skills lag behind, but you need to invest several levels in cleric for the spellcasting to pay off. Avoid this class unless you select a deity with the Trickery domain.

Druid: The druid class is another poor match with the rogue. In theory, wild shape could allow you to take on a form that makes it easier to sneak past your enemies. However, you can gain a similar benefit by sticking to the rogue class and putting ranks into Hide and Move Silently. As with all of the classes that focus on spells, you need to invest too many levels to make it worth the effort.

Fighter: This mix works well in some cases, especially if you need a few quick feats to build a powerful archer or gain access to Spring Attack. As a rule of thumb, gaining two levels of fighter grants you bonus feats about four levels sooner than if you remained in rogue. For the price of 1d6 sneak attack damage and 16 skill points, the cost can be worth it. Any levels beyond those first two hinder your development as a rogue, particularly with respect to your skills. On the other hand, even advancement in both classes and a focus on two-weapon fighting can make you a deadly fighter.

Monk: In order to gain the most from this class, you need to take about six levels. Otherwise, you could simply gain levels in barbarian for the bonus speed and buy a longsword for the damage. Flurry of blows allows you to wreak havoc with sneak attacks, but your base attack bonus is so low that you might find yourself missing more often than if you had just stayed in the rogue class. If you want to mix these two classes, you are best off taking a few levels in rogue before shifting into monk as your main class.

Paladin: This class makes a poor match. In exchange for far fewer skill points, you gain a few immunities and improved saves. The fighter and barbarian classes present clearly superior options unless you have a particular character concept in mind.

Ranger: This class feels like a good fit, but in reality, it offers little that the barbarian cannot trump. The combat styles can be useful, but unless you lack their prerequisites, you can gain the feats easier through levels of fighter. Track is also useful, but the barbarian class offers many of the same outdoors skills in a package that comes with better combat abilities. Favored enemy is likely too focused to offset the loss of sneak attack damage. Yet if you focus on archery, this class might work well for you.

Sorcerer and Wizard: These classes make good choices only if you plan on becoming an arcane trickster. Otherwise, your rogue and spellcasting abilities end up too stunted for either to function well.

by Richard Pocklington

FLAWS FOR BARBARIANS

BARBARIAN

All barbarians begin play with a flaw: illiteracy. Every other character can read and write (even those with 3 Intelligence). Does it matter? Sometimes. Does it make barbarians interesting to play? You bet! For some barbarians, illiteracy is only the beginning of the limitations that they face. Some can end up in a furiously blind rage during which they cannot tell friend from foe, others are deeply superstitious about magic, and a few refuse to use weapons beyond those common to the primitive cultures from which they originated.

Flaws penalize a character in a specific way. Most of these flaws have obvious roleplaying consequences, but they also have game mechanics penalties. The concept of flaws first appeared in *Unearthed Arcana*, but you don't need that book to use the flaws presented here. A character may only take up to two flaws, and they must be selected at 1st level. For each flaw you take, your character may select an additional feat. Thus, a 1st-level human character with two flaws may take four feats.

Although designed specifically with barbarians in mind, other characters may select from these flaws if they meet the appropriate prerequisites.

BLIND RAGE

Your ability to distinguish between friend and foe is limited once you enter a rage.

Prerequisite: Rage ability.

Effect: You may not end your rage voluntarily. Once you enter a rage, you continue to rage for the entire duration. While in a rage, you must attack a creature every round if able. You can charge or move in order to make the attack, and you may move to attack a foe rather than stay still to attack a friend. If there are no creatures within sight, you attack the nearest breakable object. You may attempt a DC 15 Will save once per round on your turn in order stop attacking an ally. If foes become visible, you may immediately switch targets and engage them.

EXHAUSTING RAGE

You rage so powerfully that you become exhausted once you calm down.

Prerequisite: Rage ability.

Effect: When you end your rage, you become exhausted (instead of fatigued) for the duration of the encounter. If you gain the ability to rage tirelessly, as a 17th-level barbarian, you are instead fatigued after a rage.

GULLIBLE

You believe what you see, and you trust others more than you should.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty on saving throws made to resist enchantment and illusion spells and effects. You also suffer a –4 penalty on Sense Motive checks.

QUICK BURNING RAGE

Your rages don't last very long.

Prerequisite: Rage ability.

Effect: Your rage only lasts for a number of rounds equal to your newly improved Constitution modifier.

SLOW TO ANGER

It takes you longer to get worked up.

Prerequisite: Rage ability.

Effect: Entering a rage requires a full-round action.

SUPERSTITIOUS

You fear magic, and avoid it when possible.

Prerequisite: Inability to cast spells.

Effect: Whenever you see an item, effect, or location obviously created by magic (whether by spell or some other means), you become frightened. The frightened condition lasts until you can no longer see the obviously magical item, effect, or location.

UNCONTROLLABLE RAGE

You have no ability to control your rage.

Prerequisite: Rage ability.

Effect: You cannot enter a rage voluntarily. If during the previous round something dealt you damage, grappled or immobilized you, or you failed a saving throw against a spell, you may enter a rage; if you do not wish to enter a rage after such an event, you must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or enter the rage involuntarily. You cannot enter a rage more times per day than you are normally entitled to.

by Mark A. Hart

DRUID MEETS WORLD

The druid possesses great power in the wilderness, but most D&D campaigns involve adventures in a variety of locations, from teeming cities to ancient crypts. How does your druid fit into the campaign when her party leaves the wilderness? Is she at a disadvantage in places without plants or animals nearby?

This article describes four strategies to help your druid character fulfill her potential whether in a forest, dungeon, or city. Although the druid's powers are linked to nature, she can maximize her effectiveness regardless of the setting. The core concept underlying these strategies calls for the druid to expand her interests and sphere of influence beyond the grove.

THE WORLD IS YOUR GROVE

Of all the character classes, the druid most likely ties herself to a specific place such as a grove. If her party plans to adventure far from her home, however, your druid should not remain too attached to any locale. Although she can maintain her home grove, she should also explore other lands, learn about exotic plants and animals, communicate with other druids, and destroy creatures contrary to nature wherever she finds them. As the campaign progresses, your druid might know many homes yet never stay in one place for long.

As your druid gains experience, she should establish a network of druidic and animal allies throughout the land. Other character classes often associate with members of their profession and druids should do likewise. According to the *Player's Handbook*, "... druids are actually part of a society that spans the land, ignoring political borders." Your druid can maintain contact with others via animal messengers, animal companions, and through magical means. Druids also might leave messages for one another at prearranged locations—messages available only through *speak with plants*, for example. Through her allies, your druid can learn about events outside of her grove and remain involved in the larger world.

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Characters need motivation and goals in a campaign, and the druid is no exception. For example, your druid might form a druidic council to combat the rise of undead in the region. She could also recruit and train apprentice druids or create a new druidic school. Regardless of her motivations, your druid should always have specific goals beyond protecting nature or defending her grove.

As your druid develops goals, she should expand her influence beyond the grove. Some goals might relate to her home, but she should also develop ambitions involving the broader world. A druid who cares only about her corner of the forest is less enjoyable for all players involved than a druid with interests in other places. At higher levels, your druid might develop goals related to other aspects of nature and even the elemental planes.

NATURE IS EVERYWHERE

Nature encompasses all things and appears in many forms: plants, animals, and the elements of air, earth, fire, and water. Although the druid's spells obviously apply in the wilderness, with proper planning, they become useful regardless of where she travels. In the midst of a dungeon, a druid can locate simple traps with *detect snares and pits*. If the party needs concealment, *obscuring mist* presents an excellent choice. If the party needs to break through a door, *warp wood* works well as the answer. If the party wants to inflict fire damage, *produce flame* provides a ranged attack and doesn't allow a saving throw. The druid also possesses a wide range of healing and curative spells to benefit her party.

A DRUID IS NEVER ALONE

Whether accompanied by her animal companion or summoning help via magic, the druid has plenty of friends. Your druid's ability to control and command animals can boost the party's combat power. These animal friends can serve other functions as well, such as sending a message to someone or scouting locations. Wherever the druid goes, she should take advantage of her spells, skills, and powers to make new friends, whether plant, animal, or humanoid.

by Joshua Cole

SORCEROUS STRATEGIES

SORCERER

More than a few players run into the problem of sorcerous stress, whether because they want a little variety in their spell list or because other players wondered why they can't provide them with the support spells they need. Many sorcerer PCs abandon adventuring entirely, their party role filled by the more traditional wizard. Does this mean sorcerers have to be second-rate spellcasters? Not in the slightest!

SPELL SUPREMACY

To keep your sorcerer competitive, select more than just the most powerful damaging spells possible. That means foregoing many of the obvious magical mainstays in favor of subtler, more versatile spells.

Early on, your sorcerer should concern himself principally with defense, saving only one or two precious spells-known slots for attack or utility spells. A sorcerer without spells like *shield* or equivalent protection won't survive many encounters.

Once 2nd-level spells become available, your sorcerer can probably afford to learn one or two utility spells, with *invisibility* and *web* being the most popular choices.

Starting with 3rd-level spells, the key to sorcerous success requires a balance of attack and utility spells. Most of the best defensive magic becomes available in the early levels, probably because spellcasters need to master it to survive to greater heights. If your sorcerer learns the Empower Spell and Maximize Spell feats, he should never need to select an attack spell as his first new spell at each level, although it eventually pays to consider more versatile damage-dealing spells like *meteor swarm* and *chain lightning*.

Spells like *shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* are often controversial selections for sorcerers, but their versatility provides the range of effects sorcerers rely on. A sorcerer who masters these spells and their higher-level variations gains access to virtually every conjuration and evocation spell, albeit at a higher level than normal. However, gaining these spells delays your sorcerer's acquisition of key spells like *cone of cold* or *summon monster IV*, and sorcerers already suffer from a delayed spell progression. Yet, thanks to his more numerous spell slots, sorcerers can cast more *shadow conjurations* than wizards of the same level can cast *summon monster IV*. In effect, if your sorcerer focuses on these spells, he vastly multiplies his number of spells known.

Finally, remember to take advantage of the sorcerer's ability to swap known spells at higher levels. *Sleep*, for example, is an excellent selection at low levels, but by 6th-level, it loses much of its utility. Swapping spells allows you to customize your spell list as your sorcerer's needs change and expand.

SORCEROUS SPELL SUGGESTIONS

The following chart presents a spell choice progression through all twenty levels of the sorcerer class. Although it doesn't confer the firepower of a damage-spell-intensive repertoire, it provides the versatility sorcerers require. This spell list also assumes that your sorcerer chooses the Heighten Spell and Empower Spell metamagic feats by either 6th or 9th level.

Level	Spells Learned
1	0—*detect magic, mage hand, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*magic missile, shield*
2	0—*ray of frost*
3	1st—*sleep*
4	0—*light*; 2nd—*invisibility*
5	1st—*enlarge person*; 2nd—*mirror image*
6	0—*mending, ghost sound* (replaces *ray of frost*); 3rd—*dispel magic*
7	1st—*identify*; 2nd—*web*; 3rd—*fireball*
8	0—*dancing lights*; 1st—*disguise self* (replaces *sleep*); 4th—*polymorph*
9	2nd—*touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*haste*; 4th—*stoneskin*
10	0—*message*; 5th—*dominate person*
11	2nd—*spectral hand*; 3rd—*flame arrows*; 4th—*greater invisibility*; 5th—*fire shield*
12	3rd—*suggestion* (replaces *fireball*); 6th—*chain lightning*
13	4th—*dimension door*; 5th—*magic jar*; 6th—*disintegrate*
14	2nd—*see invisibility* (replaces *web*); 7th—*greater shadow conjuration*
15	5th—*shadow evocation*; 6th—*shadow walk*; 7th—*plane shift*
16	2nd—*detect thoughts* (replaces *invisibility*); 8th—*trap the soul*
17	7th—*greater scrying*; 8th—*protection from spells*
18	9th—*shades*
19	8th—*horrid wilting*; 9th—*meteor swarm*
20	9th—*dominate monster*

by Oliver Diaz

TRACKING AND TRAILING

RANGER

Understanding how tracking really works adds flavor to a sometimes glossed-over aspect of a wilderness campaign. Most city folk believe tracking only means following a trail of footprints in the mud, but reading the passage of a creature often reveals surprising secrets about your quarry.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TRACKING

Tracking involves reading a multitude of signs to derive as much information as possible about your prey, its habits, and its path of travel. A master ranger gradually sinks into the mindset of his target, learning more and more until he knows its habits better than it does.

The most common signs of passage come from footfall damage to either the ground or covering vegetation. For the skilled tracker, however, they are by no means the only spoor (which is the track or trail of an animal). Scraps from past meals, droppings, and numerous other hits all might aid a watchful tracker.

Observing nearby trees for scratch marks might also provide useful information about your quarry. Creatures with claw attacks typically leave gouges in the bark of trees or on the ground in order to sharpen their natural weapons and thus might reveal something about themselves.

BASIC PRINT READING

By noting specifics about tracks, your ranger can discover a wealth of information about his quarry. However, be sure that your DM is familiar with the information presented in this article before making assumptions about the creature you track.

IDENTIFYING SIZE

You can determine the size of the creature you track by examining the prints it leaves.

Creature's Size	Typical Print Size
Tiny	1 inch
Small	3 inches
Medium	6 inches
Large	12 inches
Gargantuan	18 inches
Colossal	24 inches

IDENTIFYING SPECIES

Prints might also suggest what species or type of creature your ranger tracks.

Feline prints show a central impression surrounded by four digits with no indication of claws (typically retractable).

Canine prints are very similar to felines' but show signs of claws.

Ursine (or bear) prints, have a long central indentation ending in five clawed digits.

Deer, goats, moose and other hoofed animals have two flanking crest-shaped impressions. In general, a sleeker more slender mark denotes a faster creature, while a wider and thicker mark denotes a broader, heavy-set creature.

Horses bruise the ground with single large impressions shaped like a pie with a piece missing. If they are shod, the tracks resemble horseshoes. Most horseshoes are attached with six nails—if any are missing or the shoe shows signs of extreme wear, it could mean the horse might throw a shoe in the near future and cause its rider a delay.

Snakes leave behind swerving grooves.

Dragons and raptors leave long projecting toe impressions from a central point, three or four facing forward and one facing backward—all bearing talon marks. Dragons don't drag their tails (very few animals do). However, a dragon might differentiate from an extremely large bird of prey by marks left by its swishing tail.

Tauric tracks are similar to their parent creatures but leave deeper impressions on the front paws.

Giant insects leave a multitude of sharp, stabbed indentations.

IDENTIFYING AGE AND DIRECTION

Trackers might determine how long ago quarry passed by examining the degree of wear on a track from sun, rain, and wind. This process is called aging a trail.

However, a tracker rarely just follows a clear set of prints in the ground, but rather a combination of tracks and patterned damage to vegetation referred to as bruising. Trackers scrutinize the state of bruising and healing on vegetation to gain more exact information on a trail's age. For instance, you can tell very quickly whether tracks are fresh when surrounding vegetation, recently damaged by bruising, oozes thin natural fluids. This seepage of fluids is known as crying.

by Mark A. Hart

Dealing with Friends and Allies

PALADIN

No character class adheres to a more rigorous code of conduct than the paladin. This code outlines the paladin's duties to her deity, her faith, and the cause of good. Unfortunately, things become less clear-cut regarding friends and allies. The paladin observes a stringent set of rules, but to what code does she hold her compatriots?

This article discusses guidelines to help your paladin balance the demands of her code with the demands of friendship. The foundation of these guidelines suggests that she lead by example, not by force or coercion. Thus, the paladin's duty is to show others how to live a good and honorable life yet allow them to make their own choices.

Channel Effort Toward Good

To encourage good deeds, your paladin should offer opportunity and motivation to her allies, urging compatriots to channel their efforts toward good ends. To do this, your paladin must understand their motivations and inspire them to follow her path. For example, if gold motivates your party's fighter, your paladin might demonstrate the intangible rewards of virtuous deeds. As word of the fighter's heroism spreads, his reputation grows, and people of greater prestige and wealth offer him lucrative contracts. Yet be wary, if you fail to provide constant guidance and motivation, your paladin's allies might slip back into old habits.

Establish Boundaries

Before your paladin begins motivating her allies toward good deeds, she must establish boundaries. Few irreligious people understand the paladin's code or appreciate its demands. When your paladin joins a group, she should lay out the demands of her faith and how her code affects the party. Discuss what the group should expect from your paladin and what she expects in return. What is her stance on prisoners? What does she expect to accomplish on the adventure? Does she operate under special restrictions, such as a vow of poverty? Her allies deserve to know these things beforehand. If the party and your paladin operate on wholly different beliefs and expectations, they'll eventually fall into strife and failure.

For example, your paladin might inform her compatriots that she forbids prisoner torture and refuses to "leave the room" so other characters might torture a prisoner. No paladin worthy of the name falls for such a tactic, and the party needs to know that.

Establish a Zone of Influence

Although your paladin should do her best to combat evil and injustice, she must also understand life's harsh realities. She cannot right every wrong or defeat every evil. A paladin who fails to learn this truth is guilty of pride and probably due for a lesson in humility. Sadly, in a world filled with despair, greed, and violence, your paladin cannot conquer every problem she encounters. She must choose her battles and decide when she can help—her zone of influence. Your paladin should focus on things that exist within that zone, and avoid diluting her energy into tasks beyond her abilities. Likewise, your paladin cannot force allies to change attitudes or behaviors. Your outlook cannot be forced on others—that only leads to resentment. If your paladin accepts her compatriots, she must accept them as they are, regardless of strengths and weaknesses.

Loyalty Toward Allies

Finally, loyalty maintains a core place in all paladins' value systems as a crucial component of faith to her deity and devotion to her church. Likewise, your paladin's compatriots deserve a measure of her loyalty and trust. After a few adventures, all members of the party probably owe their lives to her and to one another. Your paladin should demonstrate loyalty to her friends, and they must come to trust her. Party members should know to rely on your paladin, and they should feel confident that she will not turn on them for every infraction.

by Keith Strohm

MONK MAGIC ITEMS

Besides their range of unique martial skills and abilities, monks rely on an arsenal of traditional and specially designed weapons. Presented here are four distinctive magic items suitable for any class but particularly effective in the hands of monks.

SAI OF THE HORNET

Created for an order of monk assassins dedicated to the destruction of all arcane spellcasters, these magic weapons can make their own unremitting assaults. It is said that countless spellcasters and supernatural creatures have fallen to the twirling blades of these animate weapons.

This masterwork steel sai functions as *+1 dancing returning sai*. However, the wielder of a *sai of the hornet* can loose it to attack on its own. A *sai of the hornet* functions as a dancing weapon except that it can also make ranged attacks as though thrown by its wielder, attacking any foe within 50 feet and suffering penalties for range normally. After commanded to attack a distant foe, it returns to the creature who loosed it per its returning property, and it continues to dance if dancing duration remains.

Strong transmutation; CL 15th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield* or *shield of faith, telekinesis*; Price 72,300 gp; Weight 1 lb.

BANDS OF THE IRON MONKEY

Inspired by the piety and dedication of one of the monkey god's most devout servants, these bands are among the most honored gifts bestowed by those in the deity's service. With the swiftness of the wind and the strength of a savage animal, the forces incarnate in these simple-looking bands combine to keep their wearer from harm.

The *bands of the iron monkey* are simple leather armbands with six silver medallions sewn along the leather that covers the outer forearm. This item grants the wearer a +2 bonus on initiative rolls and grants her free use of the Deflect Arrows feat. Both armbands must be worn, and the user must have at least one hand free to deflect projectiles. If the wearer already has the Deflect Arrows feat, *bands of the iron monkey* allow the wearer to use the feat twice each round.

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *entropic shield*; Price 15,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

OBI OF THE WHITE LOTUS MASTER

Constructed of the purest silk and delicately decorated with masterful brushstroke representations of lotus petals, the *obi of the white lotus master* is reputedly the belt worn by a master warrior-philosopher before he attained Perfection. Anyone of lawful alignment wearing the obi receives a +4 armor bonus to Armor Class.

If worn by a monk, this item reveals its true nature. When tightened around the waist of a lawful neutral character with the unarmed strike ability or Improved Unarmed Strike feat, the obi enhances its wearer's perception, allowing her to see her opponents' intentions and granting her the opportunity to counter or avoid attacks. This effect causes any foe to suffer a 20% miss chance when attacking the wearer. If the *obi of the white lotus master's* wearer is denied her Dexterity bonus, the wearer cannot make use of the obi's enhancement of perception, and the obi only provides its +4 bonus to AC.

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *mage armor, owl's wisdom;* Price 48,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

STAFF OF THE CRUSHING BREEZE

A staff of the crushing breeze is the weapon of a warrior-philosopher. These sturdy shoots of evergreen bamboo are ornately etched with depictions of serene glades, lakes, and mountains, as well as symbols meant to inspire peace. However, in stark contrast, the glistening metal of countless chains covers much of their carved surfaces. While the silvery chains hide much of the staffs' masterfully crafted surfaces, they are integral in preventing them from coming to harm when it is used in battle.

Composed of a length of bamboo wrapped in a thin mesh of mithral chains, the *staff of the crushing breeze* is a *+2 quarterstaff* that grants its wielder access to the Improved Trip feat, even if she does not meet the prerequisites for this feat.

Moderate evocation; CL 6th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *gust of wind*; Price 18,000 gp; Weight 4 lb.

MONK

by Mark A. Hart

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

BARD

Often described as a "jack-of-all-trades," the bard fills a useful support role on any adventure, but what makes them so useful? To best enjoy roleplaying a bard, it helps to understand how your bard contributes to her adventuring party.

Knowledge remains the most vital of a bard's assets, especially since many of her skills and abilities revolve around information. Not only does the bard possess the Bardic Knowledge ability, but the class gains access to all Knowledge skills as class skills. The following suggestions offer numerous strategies for making the entire party's experience more fun with your bard's skills and bardic knowledge abilities.

USE YOUR BARDIC KNOWLEDGE

Possessing information is often crucial to accomplishing a mission or surviving an adventure. Whenever possible, your bard should use her bardic knowledge ability to recall information relevant to the adventure. Whenever the DM mentions a person, item, or place, your bard should use her bardic knowledge ability, especially since it doesn't cost anything to do so. When possible, you should combine bardic knowledge checks with spells. For example, a bardic knowledge check in conjunction with *identify* might uncover more information about a magic item than either would alone.

As a bard's player, you should also consider keeping an adventure journal. Whenever the bard learns new information, jot it down in the journal for future reference. As your journal grows, bardic knowledge checks might fill in gaps, connect clues, and reveal campaign secrets. Once you demonstrate your bard's impressive fund of knowledge, other characters in her adventuring party will come to rely on her talents. You might further improve your bard's reputation as a know-it-all by continually improving her Knowledge skills.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Each level, consider putting a few skill points into your bard's various Knowledge skills. Does the adventuring party anticipate a dungeon crawl? Increase her Knowledge (dungeoneering) skill. Does the group plan to undertake a planar quest? Add points to her Knowledge (the planes) skill. Dealing with a local church? Boost her Knowledge (religion). By the time your bard reaches 2nd level, she should have 5 ranks in Knowledge (history), granting her a +2 synergy bonus on her bardic knowledge checks.

MAKE DEALS WITH THE DM

A campaign relies on getting information from the DM, and your bard can provide the ideal conduit for relaying that information. In almost any adventure, the DM has a great deal of exposition to communicate to the players. Your bard might use her Knowledge skills to learn this information and relate it to the party. This effort saves the DM time and makes the bard even more valuable.

Between games, communicate with your DM to learn about the next adventure. Don't look to learn secrets that no one else knows (although that might be a side benefit). Instead, seek to help the DM with his campaign work. Your DM is likely to appreciate your help in getting information to the players, and as a result, your bard will enjoy a larger role in every adventure.

For example, when the party heads to the Temple of Shadow, you learn information from the DM about this next adventure. At the start of the adventure, your bard shares her information with the party, such as the fact that undead infest the temple or that the evil priests there only speak Abyssal.

KNOW YOUR LANGUAGES

Your bard should learn a new language whenever possible. She might use her languages and Listen skill to spy on enemies and learn their plans. Along similar lines, DMs often use other languages to provide clues about impending threats. If an orc warlord threatens the region, your bard should learn to speak Orc. If the adventuring party plans to fight a dragon, the bard might benefit from learning Draconic. In addition, if your bard speaks the local language, she might use Gather Information and other skills to aid the party.

by Joshua Cole
illustrated by Randy Martinez

METAGAME METAMORPHOSIS

Metagaming—the bane of many Dungeon Masters and their campaigns. Whether with experienced players who have weathered the changing tides of editions or first-timers just learning the rules, it can be hard to avoid.

Players who also DM don't have to go out of their way to know how many hit points a *Monster Manual* monster has—they have probably included the creature in their own adventures. Keeping that knowledge out of their decision-making isn't always easy, even if they fully intend to try. Of course, when a PC's life hangs in the balance, few players can maintain such lofty intentions.

Fortunately, there's a way to turn out-of-character knowledge into in-character ability, and to metamorphose metagaming into tools and know-how of a classic character archetype.

INTELLIGENCE GAP

As much as they might like to think otherwise, the vast majority of gamers aren't as smart as their super-genius wizards nor as wise as their similarly endowed druids and clerics. Intuitive leaps that such characters could make in seconds might take their players hours or even days to come up with—if they can make the mental jump at all.

Fortunately for players, they don't have to make such judgements in the heat of battle.

A highly intelligent or wise character doesn't necessarily knows everything about his opponents, but guessing that a swamp-dwelling troll is vulnerable to fire, like most regenerating creatures, should not tax the mind of a genius wizard—even if he's only been out of his ivory tower for a few weeks. Certain information might be common knowledge in a world where creatures we consider myths actually exist. Even if the uneducated masses don't possess a particular bit of knowledge about monsters or magic, chances are that an intelligent, educated wizard or cleric probably does.

Allowing a player's own metagame knowledge to come into play can simply and easily account for the character's vast intellect and extensive training. Even this might not accurately represent what a high-level wizard knows off the top of his head—that's left to the collected know-how of an entire table full of experienced players, whose out-of-character planning reflects a single genius character's perceptiveness and insight in-game.

Not every group might consider this the right solution, however, as it certainly takes a more laid-back approach to metagaming than commonly found at many gaming tables. For those stricter groups, a game mechanic already exists for metamorphosing metagaming into in game know-how: skill checks.

CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE

The concept of using Knowledge skills for monster identification surely ranks high among the most valuable additions to the revised D&D rules. The Knowledge skills originally existed almost entirely for flavor or obscure problem solving. Such skills were only used if the DM paid attention to his PCs' skill lists, adding in the occasional puzzle that required a specific Knowledge skill to solve. Fortunately, the revised rules fix that.

The PCs might consider a successful Knowledge (the planes) check more vital than a crucial attack roll when confronted by a pit fiend. Under these circumstances, metagame knowledge actually makes the DM's job easier. He doesn't have to take time explaining a pit fiend's abilities if the players already know what it can do—unless, of course, he's changed the fiend around a bit.

It's perfectly within the DM's right to have a metagaming player's wizard invest a few or more ranks in the various Knowledge skills. The wizard's player certainly has nothing to complain about in terms of skills: Outside of Concentration and Spellcraft, a wizard has little to spend his skill points on besides Knowledge—at least without dipping into cross-class skills.

Indeed, alleviating the metagame bug can be as simple as requiring a few ranks in key Knowledge skills from the party as a whole. This solution probably works best for everyone concerned—except maybe the monsters!

by Joshua Cole
illustrated by Randy Martinez

ADVENTURING S.W.A.T. STYLE

The typical adventuring party enters a dungeon as a group of individuals and leaves as a smaller group of individuals (if at all). How does this happen? The PCs are a well-equipped, well-trained dungeoneering unit, right?

Well-equipped and well-trained? Probably. Unit? Not if they go into their encounters the way most PCs do. Individuals fighting as individuals, however skilled and adaptable, never prove as deadly as a cohesive unit with a good plan.

Modern small-unit tactics emphasize surprise and suppressing firepower—factors that adventurers often use. With a few simple suggestions and a little practice with such tactics, even the most uncoordinated party might become a skilled dungeon-demolishing force!

SURPRISE

Your party should most often attack first. Better prepared and often more intelligent than your foes, no self-respecting band of adventurers should be regularly surprised by a dungeon's inhabitants. In fact, the party should normally be stealthy and clever enough to claim surprise rounds for yourselves.

Forgoing plate armor for masterwork leather and a few cross-class ranks in Hide and Move Silently (or, better yet, a level of rogue) might lower a character's Armor Class, but who needs AC when your opponents don't get the chance to fight back? Spells like *invisibility* and *silence* help your party win surprise at low-levels, while the combination of *scrying* and *teleport* might catch even the highest-level enemy off guard. PCs who overuse this technique, however, should expect to see their enemies counter with *detect scrying*, or even the same tactic.

One good surprise round might put your party ahead for good in any combat—if not win the battle outright. Between area-affecting spells and a pair of multiclass fighter/rogues using sneak attack and Great Cleave—preferably with reach weapons—even a powerful group of monsters might fall in the first round. Alternatively, you might use the surprise round to get in position to flank a powerful monster or cast a spell giving allies an edge against that monster, like aiding your allies with *protection from elements* when confronting a fire elemental.

SUPPRESSING FIREPOWER

Imagine your party dumping its cleric for a second fighter, rogue, or sorcerer. A fast-moving, hard-hitting party should be able to overcome many encounters without taking any damage at all. Integral feats and abilities like sneak attack, Manyshot, and area-affecting spells (see "War Magic" in this issue) form a near-unstoppable ranged assault, especially when used together.

Alternatively, you might suppress enemies without relying upon firepower. Casting spells like *cause fear*, *charm monster*, or *confusion* in a surprise round effectively subdue enemies in situations where you might want to take your foes alive. A cleric's turning ability might also suppress a significant portion of an undead force before they even get a chance to react.

GEARING UP

The best offense for a fast-moving, hard-hitting unit comes from reach weapons, which allow you to use feats like Great Cleave in a 10-foot radius, and wielding weapons with both hands allows you to deal extra Strength damage. Characters with low Strength scores might benefit more from using sneak attack, ranged weapons, or Weapon Finesse and a pairing of rapier and short sword. Weapons that allow you to make multiple ranged attacks in a round also prove themselves invaluable.

The best defense for your fast-moving, hard-hitting party is light armor, which neither inhibits movement nor imposes a prohibitive armor check penalty. Studded leather does the trick early in a PC's career until *elven chain* and magic armors become available.

Magic items should compliment your party's stealth, speed, and hitting power. Weapons with the keen or speed properties, *rings of invisibility*, or *boots of elvenkind* provide these benefits to great effect. Construct-bane and undead-bane weapons also help you deal with the two types of creatures most likely immune to some of your usual spells and attacks. Finally, remember to keep your party's arcane spellcasters or characters with Use Magic Device well stocked with scrolls.

by Andy Collins
illustrated by Niklas Janssen

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage takes a jaunt to the Ethereal Plane, with a side trip to the Plane of Shadow. You can email the Sage with your questions at **sageadvice@paizo.com**.

What's the difference between ethereal and incorporeal? I understand that an ethereal creature is on another plane, but the plane is in the same place as the Material Plane.

Incorporeal has a very specific definition in D&D. An incorporeal creature is a creature present on the Material Plane, but it is insubstantial and incapable of being touched by nonmagical matter or energy. It is visible to viewers, although it typically appears translucent. Shadows, spectres, and wraiths are incorporeal.

An ethereal creature is a creature that exists on the Ethereal Plane (a transitive plane described in the DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide *and* Manual of the Planes*). In fact, you could simply replace the term "ethereal creature" with "creature on the Ethereal Plane" and the meaning would remain exactly the same. An ethereal creature can see into the Material Plane (although the Material Plane appears muted and indistinct), but the reverse isn't true—an ethereal creature is totally invisible to creatures on the Material Plane. Ethereal creatures can't affect the Material Plane, and thus they move easily through creatures and objects on the Material Plane.*

What's the difference between a manifesting incorporeal ghost and an ethereal ghost that isn't manifesting? Aren't they both incorporeal? You can't see the non-manifesting ghost, but he's still ethereal and therefore incorporeal, right? If the non-manifesting ghost is incorporeal, but solid on the Ethereal Plane, can't it still use its incorporeal touch on foes but do so from effective invisibility? What about its other ghost abilities?

While both a manifested and non-manifested ghost share certain abilities to ignore most effects from the Material Plane, they are not both "incorporeal" in a strict sense. A ghost that is manifesting on the Material Plane is an incorporeal creature, and enjoys all the benefits and hindrances of that state.

A ghost that isn't manifesting is ethereal, but it is not treated as an incorporeal creature. A non-manifesting ghost can't use its incorporeal touch attack on material or ethereal foes—it can't interact with material foes due to its ethereal state, and it interacts with ethereal foes just as a though it were corporeal. The only power that a ghost can use against material foes while it is ethereal is malevolence.

Can a ghost use its ghost abilities on ethereal targets while not manifesting? What about when it is manifesting? Can a ghost perceive the Ethereal when it is manifesting?

A ghost on the Ethereal Plane can use any of its special attacks that don't rely on incorporealness on other ethereal creatures. This would include corrupting gaze, frightful moan, and telekinesis, but not corrupting touch or draining touch (since both require the ghost to hit a living target with its incorporeal touch attack, which it doesn't possess while ethereal), and not malevolence (since that power requires the ethereal ghost to merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane).

A ghost that has manifested on the Material Plane has the same limitations on seeing and affecting ethereal foes as other material creatures do. Thus, only its

corrupting gaze could affect an ethereal creature (although to target a specific foe with corrupting gaze would require the ghost to be able to see the target).

The Ethereal Plane is only coterminous to the Material Plane. So if a ghost encountered a planar curtain on the Ethereal Plane, or if it could cast *plane shift*, could it go to another plane? If so, would it be manifested and incorporeal or solid on any other plane?

The only option a ghost on the Ethereal Plane has is to manifest to the Material Plane, which renders it incorporeal but not ethereal. Once manifested on the Material Plane, the ghost could travel to other planes (just like anyone else), but it couldn't become ethereal while on such a plane.

Assuming I know where it is, can I target an ethereal creature from the Material Plane with spells? My DM says I don't have line of effect for my spell because the creature is on another plane, but the *Dungeon Master's Guide* gives *magic missile* as an example of a spell that can affect ethereal targets.

Since force effects from or on the Material Plane are specifically defined as being able to affect ethereal creatures, they are treated as having line of effect to an ethereal foe even though the foe is technically on another plane. The same is true of gaze attacks and abjuration effects. Of course, you still have to be able to see the ethereal foe to specifically target it with magic missile or a gaze attack (spells or effects that don't require specific targets function normally even if you can't see the ethereal foe).

If force effects can hurt an ethereal creature from the Material Plane, does the reverse hold true? Can an ethereal creature attack creatures on the Material Plane with force effects? If they can, can they target them through walls and other physical barriers that exist on the Material Plane?

No magical attacks cross from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane, including force effects, unless the effect specifically allows such to occur (such as the ghost's malevolence power).

Can ghost touch weapons affect ethereal creatures?

No. An ethereal creature, while insubstantial, is not strictly defined as an "incorporeal" creature and thus it can't be affected by a ghost touch weapon wielded by a material opponent.

What happens when a wall is built on the Ethereal Plane? Can someone using *true seeing* see through it and target ethereal creatures behind it? If you can't see through it, what if there's a hole in the wall? Could you target them then?

Solid objects are very rare on the Ethereal Plane, as there are no resources present there to create them. Most objects on the Ethereal Plane were created elsewhere then magically transported to the Ethereal Plane (as described on page 56 of Manual of the Planes).

An ethereal wall would be visible to someone using true seeing (or a similar effect). The rules don't describe whether such objects block line of sight, but it's reasonable to assume that they do. Thus, an ethereal wall would be visible as a wall to a creature that can see ethereal objects. Even though the creature could distinguish the wall from a material object, it still blocks vision (and thus line of sight) just as a normal wall would. A creature can look through an ethereal wall with a hole in it, and the creature could then target ethereal creatures behind the wall.

Does an ethereal object block force spells cast against targets on the Material Plane? If force spells affect incorporeal creatures, and stuff on the Ethereal Plane is incorporeal on the Material Plane, doesn't an ethereal wall get in the way? If so, does it get in the way of force effects such as *mage armor*, thus stopping a PC protected by such an effect from moving through?

An ethereal wall would block force effects cast on the Material Plane. In essence, a creature affected by mage armor is "wearing" a suit of armor made of force—a suit of armor that can't pass through ethereal objects. His weapons, spells, and so on still can't affect ethereal objects any more than they normally could.

Can an ethereal creature or a ghost that isn't manifesting (and thus has a Strength score) grapple someone wearing *bracers of armor* or who has the *mage armor* spell cast on them? What about an incorporeal creature, such as a spectre? What if it's the other way around? Can a person with *mage armor* cast on him bull rush an ethereal ghost or an incorporeal spectre?

Mage armor and bracers of armor aren't powerful enough to allow a material creature to interact normally with either incorporeal or ethereal opponents (or vice-versa). While the armor bonus from the mage armor spell or bracers of armor applies against incorporeal touch attacks, it doesn't turn the affected creature into a force effect himself. A monk wearing bracers of armor can't affect incorporeal or ethereal creatures with her unarmed strikes any more easily than she normally could, nor could a fighter "wearing" mage armor bull rush an incorporeal or ethereal foe.

How can I keep ethereal characters from wrecking my adventure? They can go anywhere they want in the dungeon and can't be affected by most monsters.

Etherealness is indeed a powerful tool in the hands of crafty adventurers. That said, it doesn't have to ruin a DM's plans. Just as a DM must remember to account for powerful divinations, teleportation, and other potentially plot-derailing effects wielded by high-level characters, the DM must examine the effects of etherealness on an adventure.

Ethereal jaunt is the most common tool used by PCs, which allows a 13th-level cleric or wizard (or a 14th-level sorcerer) to become ethereal for a brief period of time. In this case, two major issues limit the spell's effectiveness. First of all, the spell only affects a single creature: the spellcaster. This means that the ethereal spellcaster is on his own against any ethereal foes he might encounter (or against material foes who can see and affect ethereal creatures). Don't hesitate to roll on the Ethereal Plane Encounters table in Chapter 5 of the Dungeon Master's Guide from time to time—most of these foes pose a significant

challenge to a single character, even one of a level capable of casting ethereal jaunt. *(Treat a roll of 01–80 as "no encounter" unless you haven't determined what non-ethereal creatures live in the area.) Even a single encounter between the ethereal sorcerer and a pack of phase spiders or a hungry devourer could limit the use of this tactic to crucial situations.*

The second limitation is the short duration of the spell—a single round per caster level. The caster likely has little more than a minute to explore the area and return to safety. The DM should be very strict in timing the ethereal character's activities, and might even require Intelligence checks to allow the ethereal character to retrace his path correctly (particularly if the ethereal character is winding his way through a complex dungeon, or passing through a lot of walls). Woe to the ethereal character who loses track of time or gets lost while exploring, as he might find himself materializing in hostile territory or, perhaps worse, inside a solid object (at which point he is shunted to the nearest open space, taking 1d6 points of damage per 5 feet shunted).

At higher levels, the etherealness *spell addresses both of these limitations, but ethereal encounters are still entirely possible. Also, high-level foes (particularly spellcasters) should be equally aware of such options, and might well install protections or guardians against such tactics. That doesn't mean that every high-level adventure should include a half-dozen devourers guarding the site from the Ethereal Plane, or that every wizard's tower must be built with* walls of force, *but it does mean that smart opponents should take every reasonable effort they can afford to guard themselves against likely avenues of invasion. Occasionally thwarting the PCs' traditional modes of operation is a good way to keep players on their toes.*

Remember that the Ethereal Plane isn't coexistent with any plane other than the Material Plane. Adventures on other planes don't allow ethereal scouting or infiltration, and thus make good changes of pace for high-level characters used to such tactics.

How does the Plane of Shadow mimic the Material Plane without the people on it doing all the things that people on the Material Plane do (like building structures and tearing them down)? Do buildings change themselves? What force decides when things change and what changes?

The Plane of Shadow is a morphic plane, where landmarks are continually in flux. Buildings and other objects often reflect the reality of the Material Plane (or a twisted version thereof), but this is entirely due to the influence of the Plane of Shadow itself and not because of any efforts of the native creatures (or shadowy parallels) living on that plane. Nor can efforts on the Material Plane necessarily result in specific results on the Plane of Shadow—while building a new castle on the Material Plane likely results in a shadowy parallel appearing on the Plane of Shadow, the layout, architectural style, or even the precise location almost certainly varies from the Material Plane structure. Anyone seeking to "outsmart" the Plane of Shadow in this manner is in for a disappointment.

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by James Wyatt,
D&D Designer at Wizards of the Coast

DESIGNING EBERRON

World-building has always been a hugely important part of D&D for me. It's the most creative aspect of the game, the one that in my mind takes it beyond a game and into the realm of a shared creative activity—some kind of art. Plus, as Rich Baker would say, it's the ultimate rainy-day activity—the kind of thing that you can do to remain involved in the game when your gaming group can't get together.

I suppose that's why my website (**aquela.com**) is littered with the corpses of campaign worlds past, why writing *Oriental Adventures* was a dream come true (particularly Chapter 10 and the web enhancement, the Mahasarpa campaign setting), and why I sent seven entries in to the Wizards of the Coast setting search a couple years back. Yes, seven.

Like approximately five thousand other people, I submitted a proposal for a water world. Submission number one of those seven was for Aquela, the world I started designing when I was 14 in 1983. Let me tell you a little bit about Aquela. I had a social studies teacher in 7th grade who taught us the basics of anthropology. The worksheet she handed out that we were to use to describe existing cultures became the framework for my chapters on culture for years to come. Everything I learned in social studies in 7th grade I related somehow to Aquela—and much of what I learned since then.

None of my seven submissions, not even Aquela, made it to the top eleven out of the 11,000 submissions that poured in to Wizards of the Coast. Instead, we picked EBERRON.

It pains me to admit it, but EBERRON is better than any one of my seven proposals. It might even be better than all of them put together.

Partly that's because the core nugget of the idea for EBERRON—the idea of a world where magic is widespread and put to good economic use, a world heavily flavored with pulp action and dark intrigue—is a really good core nugget. It's D&D at its heart, but it's D&D as we've never seen it before. It is simultaneously something entirely new and something that gets at the core of the D&D experience. That's a heck of an accomplishment, and I doubt that even Keith Baker thought of it that way when he wrote it up. Ultimately, that's what Bill Slavicsek saw in the proposal when he read it, and that's what he persuaded the rest of the committee, the brand team, and the CEO of Wizards of the Coast that we could make EBERRON into.

There's another reason that EBERRON is better than all seven of my world proposals put together: all the people that worked on it. Keith gets (and deserves) all the credit on the front cover of the book, but there are a lot more people listed on the credits inside who did a lot more than the credits might seem to indicate—including people who didn't write a single word appearing in the book.

I always enjoy world-building as a rainy-day activity, something I do when the gaming group can't get together. World-building as a group creative process is even better. During the first couple of weeks after the committee picked EBERRON as the new setting, I spent many hours in meetings and brainstorming sessions with Keith, Bill, Chris Perkins, Peter Archer, Mark Sehestedt, and Christina Matthews. That's when the world started to take form. Ideas were flying around the room faster than we could write them down. Much that was in Keith's proposal never made it into the world, and much that was not there got added, and the result is the world you see. (I'm pretty sure, hidden in there, there are even a few things inspired by Aquela.)

EBERRON resulted from a pretty amazing setting search. In some ways, it's the direct result of not just Keith's submission, but all eleven thousand submissions we received. In some very concrete ways, it's the result of a group effort. It started with those first brainstorming meetings with RPG and Books folks. It moved from there to the formal design time that Keith, Bill, and I put in, staying in constant verbal and email contact with each other. From there the process moved to the development team (and their constant questions to me and Bill), through much playtesting, and on into editing. Amazingly, the world-building process continues on even now, as new designers start working on new Eberron products, as novelists tell their stories in our world, and as you set your games there.

Together, we're building a world—describing its landscapes and its dungeons, and telling its stories and the stories of its people, great and small. To my mind, that's what makes this more than just a game.

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